

Śrī Śrī Guru-Gaurāṅgau Jayataḥ

Śrī Hari-kathāmṛta

Volume One

*A collection of recently translated material to commemorate
Śrīla Gurudeva's 1996 summer tour of Europe and America*

Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja

Introduction

Knowing that the many devotees who will be coming to receive *darśana* of Śrīla Gurudeva on his tour of Europe and America will be very eager to read any new material translated from his incomparable *hari-kathā*, I compiled this small booklet during my recent stay at Śrī Keśavajī Gauḍīya Maṭha in Mathurā. The first three lectures were translated by myself with the assistance of Śrīman Puṇḍarīka-vidyānidhi dāsa Brahmācārī. In the first lecture, Gurudeva speaks on Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura's commentary on Śrīla Narottama Ṭhākura's *Prema-bhakti-candrikā*. In the second and third lectures, he speaks on Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī's *Sva-niyama-daśakam*, a composition of ten self-imposed regulative principles which is found in *Stavāvalī*. The lecture on Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Prabhupāda's desire to go to Govardhana was translated by Janakī dāsī and the World Vaiṣṇava Association lecture was translated from Bengali by Puṇḍarīka Prabhu. Śrīman Navadvīpa dāsa Adhikārī provided translations for many of the verses found in these lectures and he also provided many valuable editorial suggestions.

Śrīla Gurudeva has stated in the past that the Śrī Gāndharvā-samprārthanāṣṭakam is his favourite *aṣṭakam*, and to anyone who is familiar with this composition, it is obvious that Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has put something really special into these very beautiful Sanskrit verses. The translation of the verses is taken from Gurudeva's Hindi edition of *Śrī Gauḍīya Gīti-guccha*, and Gurudeva's commentary was spoken to Viśākhā dāsī in English several years ago.

Śrīla Gurudeva's *hari-kathā* is always saturated with Gauḍīya *siddhānta* and his sweet style of expression is completely unique. His *hari-kathā* is my most worshipable Deity, and I pray that this humble offering entitled *Śrī Hari-kathāmṛta* will be pleasing to both Gurudeva himself and to all the Vaiṣṇavas.

Vaiṣṇava dāsānudāsa,

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Prema-bhakti jāhā hoite, avidyā vināśa jāte, vede gāya jāhāra carita—when *prema-bhakti* arises in the heart of a devotee, all his ignorance is destroyed. Even the chanting of *nāma-abhāsa* dispels one’s ignorance and *anarthas*. When a devotee engages all his senses in following *svarūpa-siddhā-bhakti** with the exclusive aim of having *bhāva-bhakti* arise in his heart, it is called *sādhana-bhakti*. By merely beginning this *sādhana* for the attainment of *prema-bhakti*, one’s ignorance is dispelled. Five types of ignorance have been described: *avidyā*, *asmitā*, *rāga*, *dveṣa* and *abhiniveśa*. Then there are the four *anarthas* of *sukṛtotthā*, *duṣkṛtotthā*, *aparādhottā* and *bhaktyutthā* which are also varieties of ignorance. *Avidyā* means forgetting Kṛṣṇa, forgetting that the *jīva* in his internal form is an eternal servant of Kṛṣṇa and not understanding what is *aparādhā*. “I am this material body”—this false identification is called *asmitā*. *Rāga* means having strong attachment for sense gratification, *dveṣa* means despising the causes of our unhappiness, and *abhiniveśa* means desperately clinging on to bodily enjoyment. All of these produce suffering for the conditioned soul.

Now I will speak on *nāma-aparādhā*. This verse is found in the *Skanda Purāna*:

*hanti nindati vaidveṣṭi vaiṣṇavānnābhinandati
krudhyate jāti to haṛṣa darśane patanāni ṣaṭ*

“To murder a Vaiṣṇava, to blaspheme a Vaiṣṇava, to despise a Vaiṣṇava, to not welcome a Vaiṣṇava properly, to display anger towards a Vaiṣṇava and to not be pleased upon seeing a Vaiṣṇava—these six are the cause of falldown.”

Being envious of a Vaiṣṇava and criticising him is called *vaiṣṇava-nindā*. We should never criticise a Vaiṣṇava, even unknowingly or due to carelessness. If we become aware that a Vaiṣṇava is engaged in some misconduct, we should remember this verse from the *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.31): *kṣipraṁ bhavati dharmātmā*—by the potency of his exclusive *bhajana* these anomalies will soon disappear from his conduct. We should offer *praṇāma* to him but not associate with him. We can respect him externally but not internally; in other words, we should not listen to what he says or emulate his behaviour. If we blaspheme such a devotee, we should beg forgiveness from him. And if we blaspheme a pure Vaiṣṇava, then we’re finished. We should never do this, even unknowingly or due to carelessness.

Sometimes to please one devotee we criticise another devotee who is not friendly with him. Beware—we should not do this. Suppose two Vaiṣṇavas have quarrelled over a trifle. We meet with one of them and please him by criticising the other, then we meet with the other and please him by criticising the first devotee. This is usually how

*All favourable endeavours (*ceṣṭā*) such as *śravaṇa*, *kīrtana*, *smaraṇa* and so on, as well as the manifestation of the spiritual sentiments which occur beginning from the stage of *bhāva*, which are completely devoid of all desires separate from Śrī Kṛṣṇa and which are freed from the coverings of *jñāna* and *karma* are known as *svarūpa-siddhā-bhakti*. In other words all endeavours of the body, words and mind which are related to Śrī Kṛṣṇa and which are performed exclusively and directly for His pleasure without any intervention are known as *svarūpa-siddhā-bhakti*.

it happens. We should be very careful not to do this because it will definitely be the cause of our fall-down. Very few people offend their *guru* because it is so plainly forbidden in all the scriptures, but we may harbour offensive feelings towards other Vaiṣṇavas. We should remain very careful about this because of its seriousness, and that is why it is at the top of the list of the ten types of *nāma-aparādha*.

Considering Śiva to be the Supreme Controller, independent from Viṣṇu and Kṛṣṇa, is *aparādha*. We should understand Śaṅkara to be Vaiṣṇava Ṭhākura, a very elevated Vaiṣṇava who is conversant with *kṛṣṇa-tattva*. Some worship him as the Supreme Controller and this is incorrect. We Vaiṣṇavas worship not only the *guru* but also other Vaiṣṇavas. Śaṅkara is a Vaiṣṇava, so worshipping him is not incorrect; in fact it is good and should be done. But it is wrong to consider him the Supreme Controller and independent from Viṣṇu and Kṛṣṇa. We can worship Śaṅkara knowing him to be Bhagavān's dear servant. Those who consider Śaṅkara the Supreme Controller worship him with the *dhatūra* flower and leaves from the *bela* fruit. They also do only half of one full circumambulation of him. Considering him a Vaiṣṇava Ṭhākura and our *sikṣā-guru*, we do *parikramā* of him four full times and offer him the flowers of our hearts. Many Vaiṣṇavas don't honour him on the day of Śiva-caturdaśī but those of us who realise that we are indebted to him as Sadā-Śiva respect him and observe some fasting on that day. Blaspheming Śiva is *mahā-aparādha*. We should never blaspheme him, Devī or any other demigod or goddess.

We serve the *guru*, this is correct, but if we do so considering him an ordinary human, it is *aparādha*. We do this all too frequently. *Guru* knows all and he has no necessity whatsoever of our service. He only desires our love and devotion. If we are serving the *guru* and thinking that we can keep something hidden from him, it is *aparādha*—why? Because this is *manuṣya-buddhi*, considering him to be an ordinary human being. One devotee was lamenting that his elderly *guru* suffered greatly just before he departed this world. This is *manuṣya-buddhi*. We should always remember that the *guru* is a transcendental personality.

We should never commit sinful activity and think that the reaction to it will be nullified by chanting *harināma*. By taking *harināma* our sins are dispelled and our hearts are purified, but we shouldn't maintain the attitude that we can continue committing sins, next purify our hearts by chanting, and then commit sin again. Never understand any variety of *śubha-karma* (virtuous conduct) to be equal to *bhakti*. *Śubha-karma* is following *varṇāśrama-dharma*, studying the Vedas, performing fire sacrifices, performing austerities, serving one's parents, serving one's teachers, serving the husband, living with the wife according to the rules and regulations, being devoted to your country, performing welfare work for the benefit of society, or making arrangements for giving medical assistance to others. These activities cannot even be described as so-called *bhakti* or as imitations of *bhakti*. If anyone says that we should perform these types of activities first and then engage in *bhakti* when spare time is available, then they have reduced *bhakti* to being less important than *śubha-karma*. And we shouldn't think that by performing *śubha-karma*, *bhakti* will come—*bhakti* is independent. It comes only from the *kṛpā* of Bhagavān and *sādhus*. What *śubha-karma* did Ajāmila perform? He attained *bhakti*—how? Based on what he learned from the Viṣṇudūtas as they were conversing with the Yamadūtas, he went to Haridvāra, performed *bhajana*, and then he attained *bhakti*. So it was by the *kṛpā* of *sādhus*, the Viṣṇudūtas. It wasn't that he chanted the name of Nārāyaṇa and received liberation immediately.

Mundane people and *smārta-brāhmaṇas* believe that *śubha-karma* is greater than *bhakti*. They don't always come right out and say it, but it is evident from their actions. They say we should give sole priority to our worldly duties and only engage in *bhakti* when we can find time. They think that when all our worldly responsibilities have been seen to, when we are half-dead, then we should practice *bhakti*. Like an old bull which can no longer stand up to carry out its work—when we are in a similar condition, then we should practice *bhakti*. This is incorrect and acting according to this type of mentality is *aparādha*.

We shouldn't give the name of Bhagavān to those who have no faith, to those who are inimical or disinterested, or to those who have no desire to hear the glories of *harināma*. For instance, while sitting on a train or bus we may chant the *mahā-mantra* very loudly so that everyone can hear, thinking that it is for their benefit, regardless if they eat meat, fish and eggs and if they have no desire to hear it. They will only say, "Can't you chant softly? Is your Lord deaf?" We shouldn't try to distribute *harināma* in this manner. Or to encourage people who come to the temple to immediately put on neck beads and apply *tilaka*, and to remove the beads and wipe off the *tilaka* once they reach home if it is necessary. Or to force others to chant. All of this is *aparādha*. We should endeavour to create faith in them first and then we should encourage them to chant.

Not chanting *harināma* with love even after hearing its glories is also *aparādha*. Sometimes we chant while reclining and walking around in the market, but we should try to chant with a pure heart and full concentration. Taking *harināma* while being submerged in thoughts of 'I' and 'mine' and considering oneself to be the material body is *aparādha*. If one has not been informed of this, that is another thing, but taking *harināma* while knowing that having considerations of 'I' and 'mine' is wrong and is an offence. Most devotees commit this offence, even if they have overcome the tendency to commit any of the other offences. What is the purport of 'I' and 'mine'? "I am a great chanter of *harināma*," "I am preaching everywhere," or "Who can perform *kīrtana* like me? I sing *harināma* in such a beautiful voice and in so many attractive melodies"—we should never think this way. This is all included within the ten offences to the Name.

One who has begun taking *harināma* must first take shelter of the feet of a genuine *guru* and serve him with a mood of intimacy. Then he will engage in *svārūpa-siddha bhakti* by hearing, chanting and remembering *hari-kathā* and performing all the nine types of devotion. As he performs *bhajana* like this more and more, then *eka-deśa-vartinī*—one 'deśa' or part of his *anarthas* will clear, meaning that partial nullification of his *anarthas* will take place. Then, when he begins to enter the stages of *ruci* and *āsakti*, *bahu-deśa-vartinī*—all his offences and *anarthas* begin to dissipate. When he begins to enter the stage of *bhāva*, then *prāyiki*—only a mere scent of these things will remain. And when he enters the stage of *prema*, then *pūrṇa*—all his *anarthas* will be fully eradicated. But there is still the possibility of a trace of them being present at this time, so next is *ātyantakī*—by receiving direct *darsana* of Bhagavān, all *anarthas* will be absolutely dispelled forever. Without having received direct *darsana* of Bhagavān, there is a possibility that a trace of these *anarthas* may remain. There are gradations in the stage of *prema*. In the beginning there will be a little, then more, then more and then more until it is complete *prema*. But in the beginning of the stage of *prema*, a scent of *anarthas* may still remain.

In the body of a *sādhaka*, one may rise to the stage of *bhāva*. Within this stage, *prema* begins to arise somewhat. *Bhāva* is defined as follows (*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1. 3.1):

*suddha-sattva-viśeṣātmā prema-sūryāṁśu-sāmyabhāk
rucibhiś-citta-māsṛṇya-kṛd asau bhāva ucyate*

“*Bhāva-bhakti* (*bhāva-rūpa kṛṣṇa-anusīlana*) is a special manifestation of *suddha-sattva*. In other words, the constitutional characteristic of *bhāva-bhakti* is that it is a phenomena entirely constituted of *suddha-sattva*. It is like a ray (*kiraṇa*) of the sun of *prema* and it softens the heart by various tastes (*ruci*).”

And *prema* is defined as follows (*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.4.1):

*samyañ masṛṇita svānto mamatvātīśayāṅkitaḥ
bhāvaḥ sa eva sāndrātmā budhaiḥ premā nigadyate*

“*Bhāva-bhakti* which melts the heart much more so than in its initial stage, which greatly augments the feeling of transcendental bliss, and which bestows a deep sense of *mamatā* (possessiveness) in relationship to Śrī Kṛṣṇa is called *prema* by the learned.”

In this human body, *prema* cannot fully manifest. If *prema* does manifest, one goes mad and would have to give up the material body. Especially *sneha*, *māna*, *praṇaya*, *rāga*, *anurāga*, *bhāva* and *mahābhāva* cannot be experienced in our present material bodies. These will never take place in the body of a *sādhaka*. They will only take place after one meets Bhagavān face to face and enters into His pastimes. The full intensity of *prema* cannot be experienced in the body of a *sādhaka*, but sometimes an *abhāsa* or semblance of these things is visible. To summarise, when *bhāva* arises within the heart, it is called *prāyiki*. When *prema* appears, it is known as *pūrṇa*, and when one directly meets Bhagavān, it is *ātyantakī*. Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura has explained these points in his commentary on *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*.

In one place Narottama Ṭhākura has written *viśaya chāḍiyā kabe, śuddha habe mana, kabe hāma heraba śrī vṛndāvana*—“when my heart becomes pure I will see Vṛndāvana”; it can’t be seen in the body of a *sādhaka*. Only a glimpse may be possible, just as once Nārada Ṛṣi received a quick glimpse of his eternal *svarūpa*. This happens to increase a devotee’s eagerness, so sometimes a brief *darśana* of Vṛndāvana is given to a devotee to increase his desire to one day reside there. Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has written, “While taking the Name more and more, what did I see? That the entire world is thoroughly void. I could only think, ‘Where is Kṛṣṇa? Where is Kṛṣṇa?’ Then after a little while, I saw Kṛṣṇa standing beneath a *kadamba* tree in His threefold bending posture. His face displayed a gentle smile and He was playing the flute. I at once went mad and tried to grasp hold of Him. He began slowly moving backwards away from me, and when after great endeavour I finally came a little closer to Him, He immediately disappeared. Being unable to catch Him, I fell unconscious. When I returned to my senses, I began weeping and lamenting, ‘Aha! Kṛṣṇa came into my hands and I couldn’t grasp hold of Him!’” This type of glimpse comes sometimes, just as it happened to Bilva-maṅgala Ṭhākura, Mādhavendra Purī and others.

Next Narottama Ṭhākura says:

*srī guru karuṇā-sindhu, adhama janāra-bandhu,
lokanātha lokera jīvana,*

The *guru* is *karuṇā-sindhu*, an ocean of mercy. This is also described in the first verse of Gurvāṣṭakam: *saṁsāra dāvānala lidha-loka, trāṇāya kāruṇya-ghanāghanatvam*. The *guru* is the embodiment of Bhagavān’s mercy. The forest fire of material existence is blazing and its flames are jumping high. We are being consumed by it and we have very little strength left—this is our condition. We have even lost our sense. A pig is unaware that it lives in such filth, searching in gutters for stool, but we can see its condition. In the same way, we have become so accustomed to our position within material existence that we consider it to be giving us great happiness. The *guru* is he who makes us realise our true position. Gurudeva is an ocean of mercy—why? If we become a little aggravated with someone, we leave that person. First we abandon them physically by no longer keeping their company, and then mentally by no longer even thinking about them. But Gurudeva is not like this. If a devotee has truly taken shelter of Gurudeva’s feet, sincerely feeling that “I belong exclusively to him,” then even if that devotee deviates from the path a thousand times, Gurudeva will never abandon him. The *guru* also never accepts offence. If someone constantly commits some special offence to him, then perhaps the *guru* will abandon them, but generally he will not.

In this regard there is a story in Tulasī dāsa’s *Ramāyaṇa*. There was a *śudra* who worshipped Śaṅkara, but his *guru* was a Vaiṣṇava who chanted *rāma-nāma*. The *guru* instructed this *śudra* to also worship Rāma but the *śudra*’s primary interest was worshipping Śaṅkara. One day the *guru* said, “Śaṅkara himself worships Rāma, so why don’t you worship Rāma?” The *śudra* replied, “Oh, you are inimical to Śaṅkara?” All devotees of Śiva say this. If you tell them that the worship of Rāma is superior to the worship of Śiva, they accuse you of being an offender. But this is not correct. So this *śudra* said, “To promote the worship of Rāma you blaspheme Śiva?” He became very angry and began insulting his *guru*. Then Śaṅkara himself appeared from the *mūrti* which was nearby and cursed the *śudra*, “You must reside in hell for millions of births.”

Hearing this, the *guru* offered many prayers and pleased Śiva, saying, “Prabhu, please be kind to him. No matter how fallen Your devotee may be, he still belongs solely to you. Be merciful.”

Śaṅkara then asked, “What do you desire?”

The *guru* replied, “That you please forgive him.”

Śaṅkara replied, “I have said that he must take birth in hell for millions of births, yet now I give my blessing that this curse will be completed very quickly. He will take birth and then die immediately afterwards until the curse is fulfilled. In this way it will take no time at all.”

And it happened this way, by the *guru*’s having prayed to Śiva. Soon afterwards the *śudra* took another human birth, then he took birth as Kākubhusaṇḍi and became a *bhagavat-bhakta*. This is the *kṛpā* of the *guru*.

Once there was a disciple who would regularly eat *pāna*, and his *guru* said to him, “Don’t take *pāna* on Ekadaśī.”

The disciple replied, “But the Deity has accepted this *pāna*; it is *prasāda*. So should we reject *prasāda*?”

The *guru* said, “Yes, we will not take this *prasāda* on the day of Ekadaśī.”

Then the disciple said, “How is this possible? I cannot accept this.” He opposed his *guru*. Then the *guru* said, “Go! From today I renounce you as a disciple.”

If the disciple does not follow the *guru*’s order, then what question is there of a relationship between the *guru* and disciple? A disciple is a devotee who moves forward in *sādhana* by obeying the *guru*’s order. In this instance the *guru* thought, “If you disobey me like this in the stage of *sādhana*, then what could you possibly do in the stage of perfection?” After this, that disciple gave up his life. If a disciple is sincerely sorry that he has disobeyed his *guru* and gives up his life in repentance, then the *guru* can accept such a disciple again in the disciple’s next life and take him forward. But if a disciple treats the *guru* with arrogance and a malicious intention, then he will certainly go to hell. The *guru* is infinitely merciful. Even if a disciple deviates and becomes lost for thousands of births, the *guru* will again place him upon the proper path and lead him to spiritual perfection. Like Gopa-kumāra—how many times did he go astray? He became a king, he became Indra, and he even became Brahmā. But his *guru* continued to give him inspiration by appearing before him and eventually led him to Goloka-Vraja. This is the great glory of the *guru*. As long as we haven’t committed *aparādha*, or if we have accidentally made some sort of mistake, then we are safe. But if we have offended the *guru* with some malicious intent, he personally may not accept the offence, but his foot dust and Bhagavān certainly will. Then the only recourse is to sincerely beg forgiveness at his feet. We should always remain vigilant to never commit *guru-aparādha*.

Adhama janāra-bandhu—if we really feel that we are *adhama*, fallen, then the *guru* will bestow mercy upon us. He is the friend of the fallen. *Lokanātha lokera jivana*—Lokanātha here can mean Kṛṣṇa Himself who is very dear to everyone in all the worlds. It can also refer to Narottama Ṭhākura’s *guru* Lokanātha Gosvāmī, who is the very life of all the worlds—why? Because he bestows *kṛṣṇa-prema*. The very life of all souls is *bhakti*. Without *bhakti*, life is not really life. Our life is *bhakti*. The *guru* is he who plants the seed of *bhakti* in our hearts, nourishes it, waters it, protects it, removes all the weeds which endanger it and keeps it healthy—this is *lokanātha lokera jivana*. He inspires us to pursue *bhakti*, nourishes us with his *hari-kathā*, protects our very life by making so many arrangements for us, disregards our numerous faults and nourishes us in all respects. He always protects our inclination towards *bhakti*. If he did not give us his *hari-kathā*, then we would not be protected. Even if he is unhealthy he still looks after the devotees.

The word ‘*jivana*’, meaning life, comes here. In one sense water is our life; without water to drink we will perish. In the same way, *bhakti* is our very life and it is Gurudeva who protects it. In his commentary on the verse *jiveta yo mukti-pade sa dāya-bhāk* (*Śrīmad-Bhāg.* 10.14.8), Jīva Gosvāmī says that suppose a child has taken birth. He will become the heir to all his father’s wealth. But this will only happen if the child continues to live. If he dies shortly after taking birth, then it will not happen. Therefore becoming the heir to the wealth depends on his remaining alive. Similarly, every *jīva* has the qualification to attain *bhakti* and the *guru* is he who gives that *bhakti*. If a devotee’s devotional life is nicely protected and the influence of *anarthas* and *aparādha* does not deviate him from the path, then he will inherit the wealth of *kṛṣṇa-prema*. On the other hand, suppose there is a devotee who has received the seed of *bhakti* in his heart, performed abundant *bhakti* in his previous birth and then some more again in

this present life, who is slowly but steadily entering into the *madhyama-adhikārī* stage, but then for some material purpose he repeatedly commits malicious acts towards other Vaiṣṇavas and eventually leaves the path of *bhakti*. He will not be the heir who inherits *prema-bhakti*.

Jīva Gosvāmī has said in his explanation of *mukti-pade sa dāya-bhāk* (*Śrīmad-Bhāg.* 10.14.8) that Nityānanda Prabhu has given a guarantee to all of us who are pursuing the path of *bhakti*: “You will all certainly attain *bhakti*! Just don’t leave the path, and don’t leave the association of the *guru* and the Vaiṣṇavas.” We must have a ‘do or die’ attitude, and then we will attain *bhakti*. But if we leave the path at any time, what will we attain? If we begin blaspheming Vaiṣṇavas by describing their faults and eventually leave the path, then we won’t attain *prema-bhakti*. If we are progressing now with fixed determination and a carefree mind, then we should continue to do so. If we are regularly hearing *hari-kathā* from the *guru*, we should continue to do so. Simultaneously we should be mindful to look after our own devotional lives by being careful not to commit *aparādha* and by trying to overcome our *anarthas*. But ultimately Gurujī is the manager; he is the one who always looks after us and makes all the arrangements for our eventual success. When a small child is moving about after having just learned to walk, the child’s father will follow closely behind him with his hands at either side of the child. If the child starts to fall, unseen to the child the father will catch him and set him on his way again. Precisely like this, the *guru* protects us. As long as we don’t abandon the path, then one day we will certainly enter into *bhakti*.

Therefore we should remain patient. *Utsāhān niscayād dhairyāt* (*Upadesāmṛta* 3)—we should hold our *dhairya*, our patience. A *brahmacārī* residing in the *maṭha* may sometimes become discouraged and think, “What are all of these useless activities, like cleaning pots, that I am engaged in day and night? What will this ever produce? Standing there playing the *karatālas* or ringing the bell in *ārati* three times a day, what will ever come of this? Just taking *prasāda*, having fun and living here comfortably—what is all this? And I see so many others around me engaged in the same activities—is there even one liberated soul amongst them? What will ever come from all this chanting of *harināma* and hearing *hari-kathā*?” If a devotee develops this attitude and eventually leaves the path, then he cannot be successful. We should beware of this mentality and remain patient. Being situated on the path of *bhakti*, we will certainly make steady progress and one day enter into *bhakti* proper.

In another song Narottama Ṭhākura writes *vaiṣṇava caraṇa reṇu, bhuṣaṇa kariyā tanu, anāyāse pābe giridhārī*. By taking the footdust of a Vaiṣṇava we will effortlessly attain Giridhārī, even if we don’t perform any other devotional activity, such as *arcana*. By keeping the association of a Vaiṣṇava everything will be accomplished. And by performing all other activities but not associating with a Vaiṣṇava, one will attain nothing. Keeping the company of a Vaiṣṇava is what gives us strength. What is the meaning of the words, “*bhuṣaṇa kariyā tanu*”? One should place the footdust of a Vaiṣṇava on his head and the rest of his body as an ornament. But this should be done with faith and with a service attitude so that the footdust will touch the *ātmā*. Otherwise it is not possible to really obtain the footdust of a Vaiṣṇava or the dust of Vṛndāvana. Taking the footdust of a Vaiṣṇava is certainly beneficial, but if we take it from a Vaiṣṇava by force, will it be beneficial to us then? If the footdust is taken in the correct manner, it will bestow upon one knowledge of *bhagavat-tattva*, *vaiṣṇava-tattva* and *bhakti-tattva*. Prahāda Mahārāja has said (*Śrīmad-Bhāg.* 7.5.32):

*mahīyasām pāda-rajo 'bhiṣekam
niṣkiñcanām na vṛṇīta yāvat*

Without being bathed in the footdust of a Vaiṣṇava, one will never possess auspiciousness. This verse says that we must acquire the footdust of those who are *niskiñcana*, completely detached from this material world. Was Prahāda Mahārāja himself *niskiñcana*? Certainly he was, there is no doubt. So when his parents took him on their laps, did they obtain his footdust or not? Materially they did but this dust is not obtained materially. It is obtained by love and by service. One will never obtain it forcibly. Is it so easy to be benefited, to merely go to Rādhā-kuṇḍa and collect some water or to go to Sevā-kuñja and collect some dust? If it is done with faith, then perhaps one will be benefited. With our *śraddhā* we may be able to really touch that dust; it is not material. By serving the footdust of a Vaiṣṇava and by being bathed in that footdust with great faith, *prema-bhakti* and knowledge of all *tattva* will arise in one's heart.

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura is explaining here in his commentary on *Prema-bhakti-candrikā* that *bhakti-rasa* is of five kinds: *sānta*, *dāsyā*, *sakhyā*, *vātsalyā* and *mādhuryā*. *Sānta-rasa* is characterised by *niṣṭhā*, *dāsyā-rasa* is characterised by *sevā*, *sakhyā-rasa* is characterised by *vihāra* (friendly enjoyment), *vātsalyā-rasa* is characterised by *sneha* (affectionate nurturing) and *mādhuryā-rasa* is characterised by the offering of one's own body to Kṛṣṇa. *Mādhuryā-rasa* is the best devotional mellow and the qualities which characterise all the other *rasas* are included within it. Those eternal associates situated in *mādhuryā-rasa* who relish the unlimited sweetness of the Yugalakiśora from a position within Śrīmatī Rādhikā's party are most fortunate and glorious. Furthermore, in their writings Rūpa Gosvāmī, Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī and Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura have emphasised the glories of becoming a *pālyadāsī* (*mañjarī*) within the camp of Rādhikā. They have said in many places that a *sādhaka* should aspire to become an eternal *pālyadāsī* rather than a *sakhī*. This is also what Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu descended to give. Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī has written (*Śrī Vilāpa-kusumāñjali* 16):

*pādābjayos tava vinā vara-dāsyam eva
nānyat kadāpi samaye kila devī yāce
sākhyāya te mama namo 'stu namo 'stu nityam
dāsyāya te mama raso 'stu raso 'stu satyam*

“Hey Devī (Rādhē)! I am not praying for anything except that most exalted direct service to your lotus feet. Time and again I offer *praṇāma* to Your *sakhī* *tva*, a position as Your *sakhī*, but I swear that my unwavering devotion will always be only for Your *dāsī* *tva*, a position as Your servant.”

When he is praying for *dāsī* *tva*, we should understand that this means a position as a *pālyadāsī* of Rādhikā. It is considered superior because from this position one can witness intimate pastimes which even the *sakhīs* cannot.

Further along in his commentary on *Prema-bhakti-candrikā*, Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura states that Sanātana Gosvāmī and Rūpa Gosvāmī are “*prema-bhakti-rasa-kūpa*”. ‘*Kūpa*’ means a well. Water from any other source cannot mix with the water in

a well—not rainwater, salty water from the ocean or dirty water from a drain. Its water is well-protected and therefore it always remains sweet. By their mercy, sorrow is dispelled. Like wish-fulfilling trees they bestow *bhakti* and thus eradicate worldly happiness and unhappiness. Even today their books and the personal examples they set in their own lives act as wish-fulfilling trees. By studying their books and following the instructions within them, one can attain *prema*. The *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* has described the topic of *rasa* in a hidden fashion, but in writing their books Sanātana Gosvāmī and Rūpa Gosvāmī abandoned any concern for possible disapproval from worldly people concerning the presentation in writing of such elevated topics. And Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura did this even more when he composed his literatures many years later.

Rūpa Gosvāmī composed *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*, but even more elevated than this is his *Ujjvala-nīlamaṇi* because within it only *śṛṅgāra-rasa* is described. We shouldn't read this in our present condition because we will not be able to understand it and will merely cheat ourselves. But those who can actually understand the elevated topics described there can read it. Worldly scholars read these books and it merely increases their sensual lust. In their books the Gosvāmīs have revealed these topics to such an extent that when worldly people read them, they will consider that mundane lust is being described there. They take the opposite understanding. If one takes shelter of a genuine *guru* and reads these books with faith, then only will realisation of these topics gradually come to them. These topics and realisation of them are on a very high stage, not a lower one. Especially in *Ujjvala-nīlamaṇi* nothing has been written for *sādhana*. In explaining the most elevated stages of *bhakti*, such as *sneha* and *māna*, it is giving evidences from the pastimes of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa and Their various eternal devotees. There is nothing worldly in this book, but if we try to read it prematurely, we will take the opposite understanding of what it is actually describing. Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura says here in his commentary that if a *sādhaka* hears with faith and love that which is suitable for his particular stage, then gradually an understanding of these elevated topics will manifest within his heart and he will eventually attain *prema*.



From Sva-niyama-daśakam—3 February 1993

From Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī's Sva-niyama-daśakam I have been explaining how we should perform *bhajana*. Generally people engage in *bhajana* according to their own concocted ideas and with minds which are not peaceful and steady. Then there are others who perform *bhajana* just as they are instructed to do so by the *guru* and the Vaiṣṇavas. For performing *bhajana* properly, some definitive regulations are necessary. Those regulations should be followed, whether one is practicing *vaidhī-bhakti* or *rāgānugā-bhakti*. I said yesterday that we will live only in Vraja, and in particular at the places where Kṛṣṇa performed special pastimes, such as Rādhā-kuṇḍa, Śyāma-kuṇḍa, Girirāja Govardhana, Nandagrāma and Varṣāṇā. We shall remain right there and not venture outside Vraja for even one moment—this was Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī's personal vow. Our determination to reside in the *dhāma* should be as fixed as our determination to perform *bhajana*.

Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī is saying, “Suppose I hear that Kṛṣṇa has gone to Dvārakā. Then suppose He tells Uddhava, ‘Go to Vraja and bring him here to meet with Me—I am dying to meet with him.’ And then Uddhava comes to Vraja and explains this to me—should I go or not? Because Bhagavān Himself is calling me, and because He has sent the exalted Uddhava to take me there, it would be proper for me to go there and certainly anyone would want to go. But I will still not go. Not by any means or at any price will I go there.” This we explained yesterday.

On the road to Varṣāṇā and Govardhana there is a small village named Dhenabāḍī. Once there was a very old *mahātma* residing there, and this *mahātma* was very friendly with a *bābāji* from Rādhā-kuṇḍa. They performed *bhajana* together, and would become immersed in *bhāva* as they meditated on Kṛṣṇa's *aṣṭakāliya-līlā*. There are two ways of remembering Kṛṣṇa's pastimes. The first method is by the strength of one's own efforts, and the other is where the pastimes automatically arise within one's heart. In the first method we have to tell our tongue that it is time to chant, and in the second method *harināma* appears on the tongue automatically without any special effort from ourselves. This second method is of course superior and can only be done after all of a devotee's *anarthas* have been nullified. A devotee will only be able to engage in this type of *bhajana* when he has received some special *kṛpā* from the *guru* and from Bhagavān. It can only be done when *visuddha-sattva* arises within one's heart. This *bhajana* cannot be done even in the stage of *āsakti*; only a little *abhāsa* or semblance of it may appear at that time.

So these two elderly *bābājīs* were performing *bhajana* and had reached a very high stage of attainment. Suddenly the thought came into the mind of the *bābāji* from Dhenabāḍī that, “I have never been to Dvārakā. I should go and see it.” Then he had second thoughts, “No, no, I shouldn't. I won't go to Dvārakā.” But if a devotee who is seriously engaged in *bhajana* maintains even a small desire within his heart, Bhagavān will definitely fulfil that desire. Dhruva Mahārāja desired to become the king of the entire world. When he performed severe austerities to attain this and Bhagavān finally granted him *darsana*, his desire to become a king was not simply overlooked. To fulfil his previous desire, Bhagavān gave him the position of a king which he had to enjoy for

thirty-six thousand years. Dhruva started lamenting, saying, “No, now I don’t desire this” but he had to enjoy that position for thirty-six thousand years before he could attain Bhagavān’s eternal association. Therefore if while being seriously engaged in *bhajana* a little desire arises in a devotee’s heart, Bhagavān will first fulfil that desire and then arrange for that devotee to again make progress in *bhakti*. Therefore beware! Don’t harbour any desires! They will leave an impression upon your mind. Then Bhagavān will fulfil that desire, and how much of your time will be lost in that is not certain. Many, many lifetimes may be wasted. Therefore keep any desire other than the desire to progress in *bhakti* far away. Who wouldn’t desire to go to Dvārakā for a brief *darśana*? Everyone would want to. Others may have been forgiven for harbouring this desire, but that old *bābāji* was not—why? This *bābāji* had found the correct path, learned so much, and made such substantial progress along the path of *bhajana*. To have received that advanced stage and then begin thinking about Dvārakā and Rukmiṇī is contrary to *vraja-bhāva*. His tendency for pure *vraja-bhajana* had become lost and Bhagavān could see that for him, all was ruined.

Therefore Bhagavān quickly made an arrangement for the *bābāji*’s desire to be fulfilled. Otherwise that desire may have remained within him and impeded his progress birth after birth. Something similar happened in the instance with Śaṅkara and Kāku-bhuṣaṇḍi in his previous life as a *śudra*. Śaṅkara cursed the *śudra* that he would have to take birth in hell for thousands of births. But by the *śudra*’s guru having begged Śaṅkara to forgive him, Śaṅkara made the arrangement for him to take birth and then die immediately afterwards so that the fulfilment of the curse did not take long at all. So Bhagavān made an arrangement for this old *bābāji* by sending a *brāhmaṇa* to him. The *brāhmaṇa* said, “I am going to Dvārakā. Would you like to go, Bābāji? I will take you around.”

The *bābāji* replied, “No, previously I had a desire to go, but I have changed my mind now. I have so little money. If I go, whatever little money I have will be expended.”

The *brāhmaṇa* said, “No, I will pay for everything. I will help you get around and serve you in every respect. Come on, come with me.”

Then the *bābāji* began to think that he was growing very old and this would probably be his last chance to see Dvārakā. Still, he said that he would not go, but the *brāhmaṇa* insisted until the *bābāji* finally agreed. This insistence was coming directly from Bhagavān. Bhagavān wanted that the *bābāji*’s desire would be fulfilled and he had sent that *brāhmaṇa* to ensure that it would be. If there is a wound, then it must be cleansed. So on the insistence of the *brāhmaṇa*, the *bābāji* agreed and off they went. The *brāhmaṇa* took the *bābāji* all around Dvārakā, but on the long, arduous journeys both going there and then returning, the *bābāji* didn’t find the time to practice his meditation. When he finally arrived back in his own village, he sat down for his meditation. But he found that the pastimes which he used to remember so easily and which used to arise in his heart automatically during meditation would not come to him, and that upon thousands of his own efforts he couldn’t make even one inch of progress in his meditation. Although he sat for meditation many, many times through the entire day and night, nothing would come to him. If anything came at all, it would immediately fly away. After experiencing this for some time, he gave up and thought, “I will go to my old friend the Rādhā-kuṇḍa *bābāji* and explain all of this to him. He will be able to help me.” So he took his chanting *mālā* and went to Rādhā-kuṇḍa.

When he arrived there, a large assembly of *sādhus* were sitting there engaged in *hari-kathā*. Seeing the *bābājī* approaching, some of them mentioned to the Rādhā-kuṇḍa *bābājī* that he was coming. They had all come to know that the *bābājī* had left Vraja to visit Dvārakā. The Rādhā-kuṇḍa *bābājī* turned his back and wouldn't even glance at the Dhenubāḍī *bābājī*. The Rādhā-kuṇḍa *bābājī* was thinking, "If Śrīmatī Rādhikā is not satisfied with me, then what will become of me? This old *bābājī* is a lost cause and I should not lose out myself by speaking with him." We should think this way also, even in relation to other Vaiṣṇavas. We will only keep relationships with those who are favourable to our progress in *bhagavat-bhakti*, and not maintain relationships with those who are not. Even if this means leaving those who are most dear to us. *Jāko priya na sama vaidehī, tyajahim koṭī sama parama snehi*—we should leave them behind and engage in exclusive *bhagavat-bhajana*. And how much more true this must be for *rāgānugā-bhajana* which is so much more difficult to practice.

The Rādhā-kuṇḍa *bābājī* understood this and even though the Dhenubāḍī *bābājī* approached him, he would not even look at him and would not speak with him. This Dhenubāḍī *bābājī* was also not an ordinary soul, so he could understand the hint and the significance of it. He thought, "If Rādhikā has rejected someone, then what to speak of Her servants rejecting that person? My friend is Her servant, so it is not at all surprising that he will not speak with me." In this way he felt no animosity towards his friend, the Rādhā-kuṇḍa *bābājī*. Very unhappily he returned to his village and locked himself inside his small hut. In a mood of great separation he began wailing, "*Hā Rādhe! Hā Rādhe!*" After some time, his body automatically caught fire and he was burned to ashes. After not seeing him for one or two days, the local residents became suspicious and knocked on the door of his hut. When there was no response, they broke the door down and saw that there was only a pile of ashes there. When all the local Vaiṣṇavas came to know of his passing, they went there and observed a festival to honour him. To this day they observe an annual festival in that village to honour the passing away of that *bābājī*.

In this instance Bhagavān punished this *bābājī* and simultaneously made an arrangement for him to be corrected in his next life. But the kingdom of *bhakti* is very far away from us and we are not conversant with all these subtleties, so this may be difficult for us to understand. Going to Dvārakā is not a bad thing. Many people worship Śaṅkara and other demigods, so if we worship Rukmiṇī or Satyabhāma, what is the harm? They are expansions of Rādhikā and it is a very high standard of worship. But here Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī says, "No! Even if Kṛṣṇa Himself is there, and even if He sends one of His dear devotees such as Satyabhāma to bring me there, I will not go." But then, after contemplating for some time, Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī thought, "I have said that I will never go to Dvārakā, but perhaps there is a circumstance which would compel me to go there." Then he wrote this next verse:

*gatonmā dai rādhā sphurati hariṇā śliṣṭa-hṛdayā
sphūṭam dvārāvatyām iti yadi-śṛṇomi-śruti-tate
tad āham tatraivoddhata-mati patāmi vraja-purāt
samuḍḍīya svāntādhika-gati khagendrād api javāt*

“But if I were to hear with my own ears that, overcome with the madness of divine love, Śrīmatī Rādhikā has gone to Dvārakā and is together there with Śrī Kṛṣṇa, then at that very moment I would leave Śrī Vṛndāvana and with a proud heart fly there even faster than Garuḍa.”

He is saying, “Just as Rādhikā would be in a state of madness, I would also go there in a similar state of madness just to serve Her. Without being invited I would go; there would be no need for Akrura, Uddhava or anyone else to come to take me there.”

Here a question may arise concerning differing descriptions given in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and the *Lalitā-mādhava-nāṭaka*. The *Bhāgavatam* describes how Śrīmatī Rādhikā went to Kurukṣetra for the solar eclipse, but of course She really went there to meet Kṛṣṇa. Just as She would regularly go to Sūrya-kuṇḍa in Vṛndāvana to perform *sūrya-pūjā*, on this occasion She went to Kurukṣetra to offer *pūjā* to Sūrya during the solar eclipse. There is very deep meaning in Her having travelled to Kurukṣetra. Very unhappily She went there, but thinking that the inner desires of Her heart would certainly be fulfilled, with this intention She went there and was somewhat successful. Upon meeting Kṛṣṇa, She said (*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līla* 13.137):

anyera hṛdaya—mana, more mana—vṛndavana
‘mane’ ‘vane’ eka kari’ jāni
tāhān tomāra pada-dvaya, karāha yadī udaya
tabe tomāra pūrṇa kṛpā māni

“I have come here—why? To take You back to Vṛndāvana. Other peoples’ hearts and minds are one, but because my mind is never separated from Vṛndāvana, I consider My mind and Vṛndāvana to be one. Do You actually reside within the hearts of all?”

Kṛṣṇa replied, “Yes, I do.”

“Then please live in My heart also. My heart is none other than Vṛndāvana, so please make Your lotus feet appear there. It will be for the benefit of Myself and all the other residents there. And I know that You also appear within those hearts which are purified, so please appear within My pure heart, Vṛndāvana.”

Then Kṛṣṇa said, “But You have met with Me here in Kurukṣetra.”

“But here You are in royal attire, You do not refer to Nanda and Yaśodā as Your parents, Your are wearing a golden crown and You are accompanied by all Your weapons and armies. Therefore meeting You here is not a meeting of the heart. For such a meeting to take place, please come to Vṛndāvana. Kṛṣṇa agreed and sat upon His *manoratha*, the chariot of His heart’s desires. Then the *gopīs* pulled him back to Vṛndāvana with both their hands and their hearts. There He remained with the *gopīs* until the very end when *prakāṣa-līlā* changed to *aprakāṣa-līlā*.

Then the *Lalitā-mādhava* describes how when Kṛṣṇa went from Vṛndāvana to Dvārakā, the *gopīs* began wailing in separation from Him. Rādhikā couldn’t tolerate separation from Him and went to Khelanavana, which is near the present day village of Śeragaḍha. There Rādhikā and Kṛṣṇa used to enjoy playing. Crying out “*Hā Kṛṣṇa! Hā Kṛṣṇa!*” She jumped into the Yamunā there and was never seen again. But this instance did not take place in this *kalpa*. In this present *kalpa*, in a form which was unseen to others, Kṛṣṇa returned from Dvārakā and took all the *gopīs* with Him back to Goloka-Vṛndāvana. In this instance Rādhikā jumped into the Yamunā, and the Yamunā is

none other than Viśākhā. So Viśākhā took Her to the home of her father, Sūrya, and from there they went to the Nava-Vṛndāvana in Dvārakā.

This is all described in Rūpa Gosvāmī's *Lalitā-mādhava*. Upon reading this, Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī cried and cried and couldn't put the book aside. In those days books were handwritten, so Rūpa Gosvāmī could see that the book would be damaged if Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī's tears continued to mix with the ink. Therefore he wrote another book, *Dāna-keli-kaumudī*, and gave it to Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī to read. At the same time he cleverly asked for the *Lalitā-mādhava* back, saying, "I have to add a few things to it." Rūpa Gosvāmī was also thinking, "If I don't take this book away from him, he may die in separation." Sanātana Gosvāmī and Rūpa Gosvāmī were always very worried that Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī may give up his life and therefore be unable to perform *bhajana*, so they always looked after him. Once Sanātana Gosvāmī saw a tiger come and drink water from the *ghāṭa* where Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī was meditating. After this Sanātana Gosvāmī told him, "Now you must have your own hut and it is my personal vow that you will always reside in it." Like this they always looked after him. Keeping the body healthy is necessary to perform *sādhana-bhajana*. Bhagavān has given us the material body which is nothing less than a *mandira*. If we leave the body, then we will be deprived of the opportunity to perform *sādhana-bhajana*. While engaged in *sādhana-bhajana* we should also look after the body. Only when we become like Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, when the body becomes fully spiritual, will there no longer be any necessity to look after it. Even if we have such elevated association as Rūpa Gosvāmī, if we lose the body then the opportunity to perform *sādhana-bhajana* is also lost. So Sanātana Gosvāmī and Rūpa Gosvāmī took care of Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī as if he were their son, younger brother and disciple and taught him everything.

The *Lalitā-mādhava* says that after having 'drowned' in the Yamunā, Rādhikā assumed the form of Satyabhāmā and met Kṛṣṇa again at the Nava-Vṛndāvana in Dvārakā. Just like Rādhikā, Satyabhāmā was very beautiful and possessed a very sweet, affectionate disposition as well as a contrary nature. Therefore, when Kṛṣṇa eventually married her, He thought of Rādhikā; otherwise He wouldn't have married Her. When Rukmiṇī saw Satyabhāmā for the first time, she thought, "If Kṛṣṇa sees her, He will forget me." Just see, these feelings exist within the spiritual world also. Their reflection is plainly visible in this world, and when these feelings become pure, they transform into transcendental sentiments. So because Rukmiṇī didn't want Kṛṣṇa to meet Satyabhāmā, she lovingly but slyly kept her away from Kṛṣṇa. But somehow or other, with the help of both Satyabhāmā's friends and Kṛṣṇa's friends such as Madhumaṅgala, an arrangement was made for Rādhikā in the form of Satyabhāmā to again meet with Kṛṣṇa. When Rukmiṇī was preventing Satyabhāmā from meeting Kṛṣṇa, Satyabhāmā threatened to give up her life. Then Satyabhāmā went to the banks of the Yamunā there, which was really the shore of the ocean, with the intention to drown herself. But what happened next? From behind Kṛṣṇa grabbed her with both hands, and because His hands were cold like a snake, she thought He was a black snake. When it didn't immediately bite her, she thought, "Oh, Bhagavān is not favourable towards me and will not just let me die—why is this snake not biting me? If it will bite me now, I will drown and die in separation from Kṛṣṇa." Then Kṛṣṇa came before her and gave her His *darśana*. Having witnessed this incident, Rukmiṇī became more liberal and later arranged their marriage.

The reason I mention these two descriptions is that it is not mentioned in the *Bhāgavatam* or any other scripture that Rādhikā ever went to Dvārakā to meet Kṛṣṇa, yet Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī is saying in this verse under discussion that She could conceivably go there. So how will we harmonise this? Has he written something incorrect? The answer is that there are many different manifestations of Kṛṣṇa, such as Vṛndāvana-Kṛṣṇa, Mathurā-Kṛṣṇa, and Dvārakā-Kṛṣṇa, and They are all separate. In the same way, the Rādhikā who went to Kurukṣetra was one particular Rādhikā, the Rādhikā who went to Dvārakā was another, and the Rādhikā in Vṛndāvana is yet another. Vṛṣabhānu-nandinī Rādhikā, the original form of Rādhikā, never leaves Vṛndāvana to go anywhere. Therefore Kṛṣṇa also never goes anywhere else. Rādhikā has two expansions: one is *samyoginī* and the other is *viyoginī*. This is described in this verse from the *Sanat-kumāra Saṁhitā*:

*śaktiḥ samyoginī kāmā vāmā śaktir viyoginī
hlādinī kīrttidā putrī caivam rādhā-trayam vraje
mama prāṇeśvaraḥ kṛṣṇas tyaktvā vṛndāvanam kvacit
kadācin naiva yātīti jānīte kīrttidā sutā*

“Śrīmatī Rādhikā has three manifestations: (1) as *samyoginī* (endeavouring to meet with Śrī Kṛṣṇa) or *kāmā* (desirous of meeting with Śrī Kṛṣṇa), (2) as *viyoginī* (anguished due to separation from Śrī Kṛṣṇa) or *vāmā* (discontented and indignant due to Kṛṣṇa’s leaving Her for another place) and (3) as the daughter or Kīrttidā in Vraja. *Samyoginī* and *viyoginī* are two different manifestations of the original Śrī Rādhā, the daughter of Kīrttidā. *Samyoginī* refers to the feature of Śrī Rādhā when She goes to meet Kṛṣṇa in Kurukṣetra, and *viyoginī* refers to Her manifestation in Sūrya-loka and Nava-Vṛndāvana in Dvārakā. The daughter of Kīrttidā thinks, “My *prāṇeśvara* Śrī Kṛṣṇa never leaves Vṛndāvana to go anywhere else.”

Because the original form of Rādhikā never leaves Vṛndāvana, Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī is saying in this verse that he also will never leave Vṛndāvana to go elsewhere. This was his firm resolution. But as *viyoginī*, Rādhikā drowned in the Yamunā, then went to the Nava-Vṛndāvana, and there met with Śyāmasundara Kṛṣṇa, Vraja-Kṛṣṇa who plays the flute. It was not actually Dvārakādhīśa Kṛṣṇa who grabbed Rādhikā in the form of Satyabhāmā and was mistaken for a black snake. It was a *sphūrti*, or brief revelation, of Śyāmasundara Kṛṣṇa. They did not directly meet there, but by *sphūrti* They met. In this way it was Vraja-Kṛṣṇa who touched Her. This was also *viyoginī* Rādhikā, the manifestation of Rādhikā who met Kṛṣṇa in Dvārakā, but the original form of Rādhikā never leaves Vṛndāvana. Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī is saying that if like this She ever enters a state of transcendental madness where Her intelligence becomes unsteady and She goes to Dvārakā, then at that time it is possible that he may also go there. He is saying that unless any location, attire or any other thing is related to Rādhikā, he has no necessity for it. He says “Rādhikā is my *svāminī* and my only relationship is with Her.”



From Sva-niyama-daśakam—6 February 1993

Two days ago I was explaining from Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī's Sva-niyama-daśakam how Kṛṣṇa is *anādi*, but I was unable to complete the topic.

*anādiḥ sādir vā paṭur ati-mṛdur vā pratipada-
pramīlat-kāruṇyaḥ praṅṅa-karuṇā-hīna iti vā
mahā-vaikuṅṭheśādhika iha naro vā vraje-pater
ayam sūnur goṣṭhe pratijani mamāstām prabhu-varaḥ*

“Whether He is with or without a beginning, whether He is very expert or clumsy, whether He is merciful at every step or thoroughly merciless, whether He is more exalted than the master of Vaikuṅṭha, Śrī Nārāyaṇa, or just an ordinary man, Śrī Nandārāya's son who is magnificently situated in the land of Vraja is my Lord birth after birth.”

Some people say that Kṛṣṇa's character was not virtuous. They say that from childhood He lied, and that no one is entirely sure where He took birth or who His parents were. Some say He took birth in Mathurā, some say He took birth in Gokula and some say that He didn't take birth at all. No one can say if His mother was Devakī or Yaśodā. They say that directly from birth He exhibited behaviour which was adverse to the principles of virtuous conduct. He told His father Vasudeva to take Him to Gokula and upon returning to Mathurā, to lie to Kāmsa by telling him that Devakī had given birth to a daughter and not a son. Vasudeva was known for his truthfulness, but on Kṛṣṇa's advice he told this lie to Kāmsa.

When Kāmsa grabbed the baby girl with the intention of killing her by smashing her against the large stone, Vasudeva began desperately begging him to spare the child's life. Why did Vasudeva beg Kāmsa so desperately? Because he had exchanged the babies in Gokula and this child was not his. In order for him to get his son Kṛṣṇa back from Nanda Mahārāja at a later date, the baby girl had to remain alive. Due to this, Vasudeva was very worried. If someone steals something which belongs to you, you will not become as worried as when someone steals something which has been loaned to you by another person. When that person comes to ask for that object which he loaned you, you will feel very ashamed. Therefore both Vasudeva and Devakī were very worried because if this child were to die, in the future they would lose the right to get Kṛṣṇa back. But that baby girl slipped out of Kāmsa's hand, flew into the sky, and assumed the eight-armed form of Durgā. She said to Kāmsa, “How could you possibly kill me? Your killer has already appeared somewhere else.” Then she vanished.

She vanished so that in the future Vasudeva and Devakī could never claim proprietorship over Kṛṣṇa. They could never say, “This is our son” and claim Him back from Nanda and Yaśodā. This was the cleverness of Durgā, but later Vasudeva and Devakī still claimed Him back anyway. They never returned the daughter to Nanda and Yaśodā, yet they took Kṛṣṇa back. This was an obvious injustice to Nanda and Yaśodā, even if we accept that Kṛṣṇa took birth in Mathurā. And if we accept that Kṛṣṇa really took birth in Gokula, then it becomes an even greater injustice. So somehow or other

Kṛṣṇa eventually left Vraja and became the son of Vasudeva. Nanda Bābā must have thought that because Vasudeva never returned the daughter which was originally exchanged for Kṛṣṇa, Vasudeva had no right to be Kṛṣṇa's father.

Returning to my original point, some people say that right from birth Kṛṣṇa had instructed His father Vasudeva to lie. Kṛṣṇa stole many things such as butter and told lies such as, "I didn't eat the butter." Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī says, "If they say that Bhagavān is at fault due to this, it is alright. If they say that Kṛṣṇa is not really Bhagavān, that He is simply an ordinary cowherd boy, then I also have no objection to that. But birth after birth He is my master." Why does he say this? Because love usually has a cause. We will love someone because they are very beautiful, very strong, very talented or if they have some other specific quality which is attractive to us. Take for example these cricket stars we have these days. How many people become their fans and adore them? But when these famous cricket players become old, then people consider them useless and not worth even a penny. Only as long as they are in the prime of their careers do people like them. Suppose we love someone because they are very beautiful, then if that person's face were to become burnt with acid, we would no longer love that person. Why? Because we only loved him because of a particular quality he possessed.

Therefore Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī says that his love for Bhagavān isn't based on any particular quality which He possesses; it is natural. If we love Bhagavān because we have a selfish desire which we want Him to fulfil, then once that desire is fulfilled we will stop loving Him. And what more is there? After Kṛṣṇa married the queens in Dvārakā, the queens loved Him. Therefore their *prema* for Kṛṣṇa is not entirely natural; it is only due to the marriage. Their *prema* is called *samañjasā*. If Kṛṣṇa didn't marry them, then they would not love Him. What is the nature of Kubjā's *prema* for Kṛṣṇa? It is of the the lowest variety; she was attracted to Kṛṣṇa by the selfish desire to satisfy her lust. Her *prema* can never subjugate Kṛṣṇa. Upon seeing Kṛṣṇa's great beauty, she became attracted and desired that He fulfil her selfish desire. Therefore, as long as Kṛṣṇa remained before her, she loved Him, and when He left, her *prema* stopped. This *prema* is called *sādhāraṇī*, which means it is ordinary because there is selfishness within it. This *prema* will not overpower Kṛṣṇa, and by approaching Him in this mood, eternal *prema* for Him cannot be attained.

Although the Dvārakā queens previously had relationships with Kṛṣṇa for many lifetimes, their love still falls within the category of *samañjasā*. Their love can never subjugate Kṛṣṇa, even though there were thousands of them—sixteen-thousand one-hundred and eight. Their love for Kṛṣṇa is a mixture of a longing to fulfil their own desires and the desire to please Him. But even that portion of their love which is the desire to make Kṛṣṇa happy becomes divided. When they give birth to a son, their *prema* becomes divided between the son and Kṛṣṇa. When they give birth to a second son, then their *prema* is further divided between the two sons and Kṛṣṇa. And when they give birth to their tenth son, their *prema* is divided accordingly. It was not only one queen who gave birth to ten sons; each queen begot ten sons. Due to this, their *prema* for Kṛṣṇa is divided, but the *gopīs'* *prema* never became divided; it is solid and undivided. They did not love Kṛṣṇa because He married them. Their *prema* is called *samarthā*, which means they only desire Kṛṣṇa's happiness. They don't consider their own happiness. But the queens in Dvārakā desire their own happiness as well.

We devotees love our bodies, our clothes, our hair, our wealth, and our beauty so much, but do we possess an equal amount of love for Kṛṣṇa? Do we have as much love for Kṛṣṇa as we do for our sleep? No. Something is there, and it will slowly increase. By engaging in devotional activities such as *guru-sevā*, *Vaiṣṇava-sevā* and hearing *hari-kathā*, it will gradually increase. Then our *prema* for Kṛṣṇa will change from *sādhāraṇī* to *samañjasā*, and eventually from *samañjasā* to *samarthā*. That *prema* which is dependent on a particular cause or circumstance is not *samarthā*. When that cause expires or the circumstance changes, such love will stop. The *gopīs'* *prema* for Kṛṣṇa never ends, and those who perform *bhajana* following in their footsteps will possess that same love for Kṛṣṇa which is not dependent on any cause. Nārada Ṛṣi says in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (7.1.30, 31):

*kāmād dveṣād bhayāt snehād
yathā bhaktyeśvare manaḥ
āveśya tad-agmaṁ hitvā
bahavas tad-gatiṁ gatāḥ*

*gopyaḥ kāmād bhayāt kaṁso
dveṣāc caidyādayo nṛpāḥ
sambandhād vṛṣṇayaḥ snehād
yūyaṁ bhaktyā vayaṁ vibho*

“Many persons, having adopted the path of *bhakti*, obtained the highest destination (*prema*) by full absorption of the mind in Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Similarly, many persons, having absorbed the mind in Śrī Kṛṣṇa, whether through lust, malice, fear or affection, were purified of all contamination and obtained liberation. O King, the *gopīs* through lust, Kāmsa through fear, Śiṣupāla and other kings through envy, the Vṛṣṇis through their familial relationship, you Pāṇḍavas through affection and we devotees through *bhakti* have attained Śrī Kṛṣṇa.”

Amongst these, malice and fear are *pratikula*, unfavourable to *bhakti*, so those who attached their consciousness to Kṛṣṇa through these emotions did not attain *bhakti*. This verse is given to explain that if someone meditates on Kṛṣṇa in these moods, they may attain liberation, but not *bhakti*. But oddly enough, if one meditates on Bhagavān in these unfavourable moods such as anger, malice and fear, his absorption will be deeper than those who have attached their minds to Him through *bhakti*.

At the moment we are sitting before the Deities hearing *hari-kathā*, but suppose a snake suddenly entered the room. What will everyone do? Everyone will turn their attention to the snake and keep their vision fixed upon it. If the snake goes one way, everyone would run the other way, and then if it moved in another direction, everyone would again move away from it. Our previous absorption in hearing *hari-kathā* would be lost. This is the nature of fear. In a similar way the minds of demons like Rāvaṇa, Kāmsa and Śiṣupāla were deeply absorbed in Bhagavān and they attained *mukti* although their moods were unfavourable. If one absorbs his mind in Kṛṣṇa through *bhakti*, by having a familial relationship with Him, or by *sneha*, he can go to Goloka-Vṛndāvana, the highest place. But to actually do this is very difficult.

In our discussion of these two verses from the *Bhāgavatam*, we have rejected malice and fear because they are *pratikula*. So the moods of *bhakti*, *kāma*, *sambandha* (being

related to Kṛṣṇa) and *sneha* still remain. *Sneha* can also be removed from this list. *Sneha* which is included within *vaidhī-bhakti* is the *sneha* like that of the Pāṇḍavas. Within it is *aiśvarya*, awareness of Kṛṣṇa's majesty. In *rāgānugā-bhakti* there is no place for *aiśvarya*, so this *sneha* can be left aside. And then there is the other *sneha* which comes after the stage of *prema*: there is *prema*, and then comes *sneha*, *māna*, *praṇaya* and so on. Because it is above the stage of *prema*, it has no utility for *rāgānugā-bhakti*. A devotee can experience *bhāva in sādhana*, the stage of practice, but *prema* can only be experienced in *sādhya*, the stage of perfection. When that *prema* increases more and more and a devotee's heart melts upon directly gaining sight of his *iṣṭadeva*, worshipable Deity, it is called *sneha*. This *sneha* is the sole property of *rāgātmikā* devotees, those who reside in the spiritual world, so it is not relevant to us in our present condition.

In this verse Nārada says *yūyam bhaktyā vayam vibho*: he attained Bhagavān's mercy through *bhakti*. How did that *bhakti* come to him? Thousands of sages came to his village and remained there through the four months of Caturmāsya. During this time Nārada rose early in the morning and bathed with them, rendered service to them, heard *hari-kathā* from them and sincerely followed their instructions. By doing this he entered into *vaidhī-bhakti*, and afterwards he left home to practice austerities. By continuing to worship Bhagavān and chanting his *mantra* for some time, he eventually received a brief glimpse of the four-armed form of Bhagavān. His *mantra* was for worshipping that form of Bhagavān. According to the nature of a devotee's *mantra*, when he becomes perfected he will realise the Deity of that specific *mantra*. For instance, we Vaiṣṇavas chant the *gopāla-mantra*. If we do *bhajana* properly and continue to chant this *mantra*, we will one day receive *darśana* of our *iṣṭadeva* Gopāla, just as Gopakumāra did.

So Nārada caught a glimpse of Nārāyaṇa, and then Nārāyaṇa told him, "For now you cannot have my *darśana* eternally because, although your heart has become pure, there are still some *sattvic* desires remaining within you. When these have also been eradicated, you will shed your material body and become My eternal associate. Then for eternal time you will be able to see me. For now, wander around the material world performing *bhajana* and preaching." Then Nārada abandoned whatever attachments he had, including his previous determination to remain in a solitary place to perform *bhajana*. Following the order of Bhagavān, he began wandering in all directions for preaching. When death came, Nārada placed his feet on death, and unseen to anyone, he shed his material body and acquired a spiritual body. In this body he was transferred to Vaikuṅṭha, and later in a manifest form he began wandering in the material world for preaching.

By his practice of *vaidhī-bhakti*, Nārada was transferred to Vaikuṅṭha. But regardless of how much *prema* a devotee possesses, *vaidhī-bhakti* can only take one to Vaikuṅṭha and no higher. So even in this *prema* there is a cause involved. But where there is no cause whatsoever, where a devotee serves Bhagavān naturally, not considering whether He is actually Bhagavān or not or whether He is beautiful or not, and where the natural loving proclivity of the heart is firmly attached to Bhagavān, this *prema* is truly causeless and it will take one directly to Goloka-Vraja.

From these two verses from the *Bhāgavatam* we have eliminated *dveṣa* (hatred), *bhaya* (fear), *bhakti* and *sneha*. Now only two of the moods mentioned in these verses

remain for us to analyse: *kāma* and *sambandha*. *Sambandha* means having a familial relationship with Bhagavān, as the Pāṇḍavas did, but their mood was mixed with *aiśvarya*, so we reject it. Were the *gopīs* related to Kṛṣṇa or not? Yes. If the *gopīs* had not come in the caste of cowherd people, would they have been able to mix with Kṛṣṇa? Although the *yajña-patnīs* had *prema* for Kṛṣṇa, they couldn't mix with Him because they were from a higher caste. Since the *gopīs* and Gopāla both came from the cowherd caste, there could be friendship between them.

In *rāgānugā-bhakti*, *kāma* and *sambandha* are known as *kāmānugā* and *sambandh-ānugā*. All of the residents of Vraja are *sambandhānugā* but amongst them are those who have *kāma*, amorous desire, for Kṛṣṇa. Although in this situation there is *sambandha*, there is *kāma* also. There are also many devotees in Vraja who do not possess *kāma*. In Vraja, in the mellows of *dāśya*, *sakhya* and *vātsalya* there is no *kāma*. But in the *gopīs* there is both *kāma* and *sambandha*. *Kāma* means natural *prema* which has no cause. From birth that *prema* is present. Because that *prema* is natural, it will never end. Real love is when although a particular reason or circumstance may arise which should terminate it, the *prema* just increases more and more. And that love which ends because of having a cause is not really *prema*. Therefore worldly love is not actually *prema*. In this world, when a little selfishness enters the love, it comes to an end. But if this happens in the spiritual world, the *prema* simply increases. If a quarrel takes place between Kṛṣṇa and the *gopīs*, then there may be a display of *māna* and then perhaps some *pravāsa* where one of the parties goes to a distant place, but soon afterwards they will meet again. This is the nature of the *gopīs'* *kāmānugā*.

Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī says that there is no cause of his love for Kṛṣṇa, even if Kṛṣṇa is *ādi* or *anādi*, if He possesses good qualities or all bad qualities, or if He is a liar, thief or whatever. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu says this in the final verse of Śikṣāṣṭaka:

*āśliṣya vā pāda ratām pinaṣtu mām
adarśanān marma-hatām karotu vā
yathā tathā vā vidadhātu lampaṭo
mat-prāṇa-nāthas tu sa eva nāparaḥ*

“Let that debauchee (Kṛṣṇa) delight this maidservant who is attached to the service of His lotus feet by tightly embracing Me. Or let Him trample Me, or break My heart by not being present before Me. He may do whatever He likes. Even if He sports with other lovers directly in front of Me, He is still My *prāṇanātha*. There is no one other than Him.”

In the *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* there is something more written on this point. Śrīmatī Rādhikā thinks this way: “If Kṛṣṇa is displeased with Me and desires the company of another *gopī*, then I will go to that *gopī* and serve her. I will please her with My sincere service and then arrange for her to meet with Kṛṣṇa.” In such *prema* there is no selfishness whatsoever and no cause of it.

Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī says that just as Kṛṣṇa is *sarva-kāraṇa-kāraṇam*, meaning there is no cause for Him, similarly my *prema* for Him will be causeless and it will never come to an end. But in this world all love is tinged by selfishness, and when that selfish desire is not fulfilled, the love ends. Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī says *pramīlat-kāruṇyaḥ praguṇa-karuṇā-hīna iti vā*: whether He is merciful or very cruel. Apparently exhibit-

ing inconceivable cruelty, Kṛṣṇa left the *gopīs* and went to Mathurā and Dvārakā. Śrīmatī Rādhikā and the *gopīs* began speaking amongst themselves, “If He can leave us, they why can’t we leave Him? We will also forget Him.” Then if Uddhava or another *gopī* says to them, “Okay, leave Him then, but why do you continue to speak about Him?”

Rādhikā will reply, “We simply can’t stop talking about Him.”

“Why can’t you stop?”

“I don’t know; there is no cause.”

The *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* says (10.47.17):

tad alam asita-sakhyair dustyajas tat-kathārthaḥ

The *gopīs* say here, “So let us give up all friendship with this black person, even if we can’t give up talking about Him. Alright, so He has left us. We hope that He will be happy. But why is it that we cannot stop thinking about Him?” This is causeless *prema*. Don’t think that only the *gopīs* experienced painful unhappiness and separation and that Kṛṣṇa did not. On the contrary, Kṛṣṇa’s condition was much more pitiable than the *gopīs*’. The *gopīs* could get some consolation by conversing with one another, but Kṛṣṇa had no one to share His feelings of separation with. Kṛṣṇa would cry and cry, sometimes all night long and not get any sleep, but still He could not reveal His suffering to anyone. The *gopīs* could speak about it amongst themselves, to Uddhava or even to a bumblebee, but Kṛṣṇa’s condition was especially awful. Therefore don’t ever think that Kṛṣṇa was cruel in leaving the *gopīs*. This instance shows that in Kṛṣṇa’s *prema* also there is not even a trace of selfishness. Kṛṣṇa said (*Bhagavad-gītā* 4.11):

*ye yathā mām prapadyante
tāms tathaiva bhajāmy aham*

“As My devotees surrender unto Me, I reward them accordingly.”

My *gurudeva*, Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, said that this verse must be a mistake; Kṛṣṇa doesn’t follow this principle. Really it is not a mistake, because Kṛṣṇa has spoken this verse for people in general. But from a special point of view, Kṛṣṇa has spoken incorrectly here because in another verse (*Śrīmad-Bhāg.* 10.32.22) He said, “Hey *gopīs*! Even if I endeavoured for the length of an entire lifetime of Brahmā, I would still be unable to compensate you. Because you have broken out of the tight shackles of family ties and served Me honestly, you will have to let your own virtuousness act as compensation. I am forever indebted to you.” It was impossible for Him to reward them accordingly for their surrender.

To summarise, in this fifth verse from *Sva-niyama-daśakam*, Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī says, “Regardless if Kṛṣṇa is merciful or not, if He is an ordinary human being or if He is superior to even the Lord of Vaikuṅṭha, birth after birth He is my master. My love for Him is not related to these things. I love Him just as He is, as Nanda’s son Kṛṣṇa, and life after life I will take birth in Vraja and the love which I will place at His feet will always be causeless.”

Now we will analyse the sixth verse of Sva-niyama daśakam:

*anādrtyodgītām api muni-gaṇair vaiṇika-mukhaiḥ
pravīṇām gāndharvām api ca nigamais tat priyatamām
yaḥ ekam govindam bhajati kapaṭi dāmbhikatayā
tad-abhyarṇe sīrṇe kṣaṇam api na yāmi vratam idam*

“Not even for one moment will I take the dry association of a hypocritical person who vainly worships Śrī Govinda alone and does not worship Śrīmatī Rādhikā, who has been declared by the *munis* headed by Nārada Ṛṣi and by all the scriptures to be Kṛṣṇa’s dearest beloved.”

This is Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī’s vow. *Munis* like Nārada, Parāśara, Vyāsa, Śukadeva, as well as the Vedas and Upaniṣads and even Brahmā and Śaṅkara sing the glories of the effulgence which emanates from the nails of Śrīmatī Rādhikā’s feet. Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has written in one song:

*umā, ramā, satyā, śacī, candrā, rukmiṇī
rādhā-avatāra sabe-āmnāya vāṇī*

“The revealed truth of all scriptures declare that Pārvatī, Lakṣmī, Satyā, Indra’s wife Śacī, Candrāvalī and Rukmiṇī are all expansions from the original Rādhā.”

This is the instruction of the Vedas, to worship Her feet. Śrīla Prabodhānanda Sarasvatī writes (*Śrī Rādhā-rasa-sudhā-nidhi* 4):

*yo brahma-rudra-śuka-nārada-bhīṣma mukhyair
ālakṣito na sahasā puruṣasya tasya
sadyo vaśīkaraṇa-cūrṇam ananta-śaktim
tam rādhikā-caraṇa-reṇum anusmarāmi*

“Even great personalities headed by Brahmā, Mahādeva, Śuka, Nārada and Bhīṣma are unable to abruptly obtain the direct audience of the Supreme Person, Svayaṁ Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Yet the dust from the lotus feet of Śrī Rādhā is an infallible powder possessed of unlimited potency to immediately bring Śrī Kṛṣṇa under control. I constantly meditate upon that dust from Her lotus feet.”

We worship the dust of Rādhikā’s feet and place it on our heads. It is like a very strong powdered medicine. Brahmā, Nārada, Śaṅkara, Bhīṣma and so many others worship Kṛṣṇa until they become completely exhausted, but they don’t subjugate Him and He doesn’t grant them His *darśana*. They don’t attain even a glimpse of Kṛṣṇacandra’s lotus feet. In our present condition we cannot directly attain Rādhikā’s footdust, but just by worshipping it and placing it on our heads in our meditation, Kṛṣṇa will be subjugated. This being so, who can imagine what benefit we will accrue when we actually obtain the *real* dust? Uddhava prays (*Śrīmad-Bhāg.* 10.47.63):

*vande nanda-vraja-strīṇām
pāda-reṇum abhikṣṇasaḥ
yāsām hari-kathodgītām
punāti bhuvana-trayam*

“I offer *praṇāma* time and again to the particles of dust of the lotus feet of the *gopīs* of Nandarāya’s Vraja. The *gopīs*’ singing of the glories of Śrī Kṛṣṇa purifies the three worlds.”

*yasyāḥ kadāpi vasanāñcala khelanottha-
dhanyāti-dhanya-pavanena kṛtārtha mānī
yogīndra durgama-gatir madhusūdano ’pi
tasyā namo ’stu vṛṣabhānu bhuvo diśe ’pi*

“Madhusūdana Śrī Kṛṣṇa is very difficult to attain even for the best of *yogīs*. Yet He considers Himself to be blessed when touched by the most holy breeze generated by the movement of the border of Śrī Rādhā’s cloth which carries the fragrance of Her limbs. I offer *praṇāma* to the direction in which Vṛṣabhānu-nandinī Śrī Rādhā is situated.” (*Rādhā-rasa-sudhā-nidhi 2*)

Her footdust is impossible for even the *yogīndras*, the kings of *yoga* practitioners, to attain. Who are these *yogīndras*? Śaṅkara, Brahmā, Śukadeva, the four Kumāras, Vyāsa—they are all *yogīndras*. Then the *Bhāgavatam* describes the nine Yogīndras, Pip-palāyana, Kavi and so on, but we don’t read there that they ever prayed for Rādhikā’s footdust. This footdust is very difficult to obtain. This verse from *Rādhā-rasa-sudhā-nidhi* describes a pastime where, after a quarrel, Rādhikā and Kṛṣṇa sat on opposite sides of Rādhā-kuṇḍa. Then the breeze blew the scent emanating from Her garment across the lake, and when it reached Him, it completely overpowered Him. So the great personalities mentioned in this verse offer *praṇāma* unto the direction from which that breeze came.

This sixth verse by Raghunātha dāṣa Gosvāmī describes Śrīmatī Rādhikā who is Kṛṣṇa’s most beloved *sakhī* and who is worshipped by *munis* headed by Nārāda. Śukadeva Gosvāmī did not openly describe Her glories in the *Bhāgavatam*; he only gave a hint of them in codes. The *Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad* describes something more of Her glories. Later, by the influence of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, devotees such as Rūpa Gosvāmī, Sanātana Gosvāmī and Prabodhānanda Sarasvatī who were contemporary with Him gave wider descriptions of Her. Even before Mahāprabhu’s appearance, Jayadeva Gosvāmī also described Her glories, but that was only because he had taken shelter of Mahāprabhu’s *dhāma*, Navadvīpa, and resided there. Otherwise this conception would not have come to him either.

Raghunātha dāṣa Gosvāmī says that someone who worships Govinda without Rādhikā is a hypocrite and very proud. Bhaktivinoda Thākura writes:

*ātapa-rahita sūraja nāhi jāni
rādhā-virahita mādharma nāhi māni*

Just as the sun is not recognised without its rays and its heat, similarly Kṛṣṇa is not

acknowledged without His *śakti*, Śrīmatī Rādhikā. Those who worship Him without Rādhikā are proud hypocrites. The famous poet Mīrabai didn't worship the *gopīs*, but because she somewhat took shelter of Satyabhāmā and Rukmiṇī, her final destination was Dvārakā. If she had merely worshipped Kṛṣṇa alone, she would have never gone to Him and her worship of Him would have been like that of those who worship Kṛṣṇa as being formless and without qualities.

Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī says that his determined vow is that he will never associate with a proud hypocrite who worships Kṛṣṇa alone; one becomes contaminated by even seeing such a person. In his Sankalpa-prakāśa-stotram he writes:

*anārādhya rādhā-padāmbhoja reṇuṃ
anāśritya vṛndātavīm tat padāṅkaṃ
asambhāsyā-tad-bhāva-gambhīra cittān
kutaḥ śyāma-sindho rasasyāvagāhaḥ*

“If you have never worshipped the dust of the feet of Śrīmatī Rādhikā or the land of Vraja which is marked with the impressions of Her lotus feet, or have not served the lotus feet of those devotees who taste the profound loving sentiments of Śrīmatī Rādhikā, how can you become immersed in the blackish ocean of nectar known as *śyāma-sindhu-rasa*?”

In this verse the words *asambhāsyā-tad bhāva-gambhīra cittān* mean never having spoken to those great personalities who are the crown jewels of *rasika* devotees, such as Rūpa Gosvāmī, Sanātana Gosvāmī, Jīva Gosvāmī and Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī, whose hearts are deeply and gravely immersed in Rādhikā's *bhāva*. The words *śyāma-sindho* refer to the ocean of *kṛṣṇa-prema* with which Rādhikā's heart is completely filled. *Kṛṣṇa-prema* is our *prayojana*, our ultimate objective—not the *prema* which Kṛṣṇa has for His devotees, but the *prema* which is *āśraya-jātīya*, which the cows, the *sakhās*, Mother Yaśodā and the *gopīs* have for Kṛṣṇa. The *vraja-prema* which is described in this verse is the very root aim of our *sādhana*, and the root of that *vraja-prema* is the *praṇaya* of the *gopīs*. Furthermore, Sanātana Gosvāmī has written a verse somewhere praying for the love which Rūpa Gosvāmī possesses for the feet of Caitanya Mahāprabhu, and which is more inclined towards Śrīmatī Rādhikā than Kṛṣṇa, to come within his own heart. Prabodhānanda Sarasvatī writes in his *Rādhā-rasa-sudhā-nidhi* (80):

*rādhā-dāsyam apāsyā yaḥ prayatate govinda saṅgāśayā
so 'yam pūrṇa-sudhāruceḥ paricayaṃ rākāṃ vinā kāṅkṣati
kiñca śyāma-rati pravāha-laharī-bijaṃ na ye tām vidus
te prāpyāpi mahāmṛtāmbudhim aho binduṃ paraṃ prāpnuyuḥ*

“One who gives up the service of Śrī Rādhā and endeavours to obtain direct association with Śrī Kṛṣṇa is like one who aspires to behold the full moon on a day other than *pūrṇimā* (the day of the full moon). Alas! For those who do not know Śrī Rādhā, who is the fountainhead of the undulating stream of *kṛṣṇa-prema*, even though they may obtain an ocean of supreme nectar, in actuality it is only a drop.”

Kṛṣṇa is only complete when He is accompanied by Śrīmatī Rādhikā. The *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.7.4) says:

*bhakti-yogena manasi
samyak praṇihite 'male
apaśyat puruṣaṁ pūrṇaṁ
māyā ca tad-apāśrayam*

“By the power of *bhakti-yoga*, Śrīla Vyāsadeva, being firmly concentrated in meditation with a purified mind, saw Śrī Kṛṣṇa fully endowed with spiritual effulgence, with His plenary portions, and with His internal potency of *svarūpa-śakti*. His external potency *māyā*, being of an inferior nature, was seen in the background under His control.”

In this verse the words *apaśyat puruṣaṁ pūrṇaṁ* refer to Kṛṣṇa in His fullest aspect, which can only mean that He is accompanied by Śrīmatī Rādhikā. This is the inner meaning, and how did Vyāsa see this? By the practice of *bhakti-yoga*. And by what kind of *bhakti-yoga*? Was it by *vaidhī-bhakti-yoga*? No. By *bhakti-yoga* which was full of the mood of Vraja. And by *vātsalya-bhāva* will one see Kṛṣṇa as *apaśyat puruṣaṁ pūrṇaṁ*, in His complete form? No. Kṛṣṇa is only complete when He is with Rādhikā. Vyāsa is none other than Bhagavān Himself, so certainly he was able to see this. Nārada Ṛṣi says in his *Nārada-pañcaratra*:

*lakṣmī sarasvatī dūrgā sāvitri rādhikā parā
bhaktyā namanti yat sasvat tvam namāmi parātparam*

“I always offer *praṇāma* unto the Supreme (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) who is devoutly worshipped by Lakṣmī, Sarasvatī, Durgā, Sāvitri and the supreme Śrīmatī Rādhikā.”

All these goddesses are merely parts of Rādhikā; they are not complete in themselves. Therefore by performing *bhajana* of Rādhikā all of them are automatically worshipped and there is no need to worship them separately.



A devotee asked Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja if there was any special significance in Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja having expressed a desire to go to Govardhana at the very end of his life. The following is Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja's reply:

Before the appearance of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, various incarnations of Bhagavān such as Matsya, Rāmacandra and even Kṛṣṇa Himself descended to offer a particular gift for the welfare of human society according to the people's eligibility to receive it. Each gift had its own unique characteristic. Nṛsimhadeva came to give more than Matsya and Paraśurāma came to give more than Nṛsimha. What Rāmacandra came to give for the welfare of the living entities was still more advanced, and what all incarnations gave collectively together, as well as that which They did not give, was absorbed into Kṛṣṇacandra for His descent. He gave what no incarnation ever gave before Him. He gave one very special item—*prema*. Rāmacandra gave *dāsya-bhāva* but not pure *prema* because at that time people were not qualified to receive it. They were not eligible. Therefore Rāmacandra only gave *prema* which was bound within the limits of *maryāda* (rules and regulations). This was suitable and useful for the people of that age. But Kṛṣṇacandra removed this *maryāda* and gave *prema* combined with *viśrambha-bhāva*, the most beautiful variety of *prema* which is unrestricted in any way and very intimate. And He gave it not only to human beings, but to birds, animals, insects and even to creepers. No other incarnation had ever done this before.

The eternal position of every living entity, in any species of life, is to love Kṛṣṇa—*jīvera svarūpa haya nityera-kṛṣṇa-dāsa*. Kṛṣṇa gave *prema* to creepers, peacocks, cuckoos, parrots and He also made them mad with this *prema*. Other incarnations gave the Vedas and instructions to respect your parents, respect your elders and to live properly with your marital partner. These instructions are included within the category of regulative injunctions, but no incarnation before Kṛṣṇa had shown so clearly that the very *svarūpa* of the *jīva* is to love Kṛṣṇa. Therefore the *prema* which Kṛṣṇa bestowed is very special.

Kṛṣṇa had a special method for giving *prema*. He had a scale with which He used to weigh someone's devotion before giving them *prema*. To one who had devotion worth one *paisā*, He gave *prema* worth one *paisā*. To one who had a *bhāva* worth two *paisā*, He gave *prema* worth two *paisā*. He did not give more and He did not give less than what was appropriate; He weighed their devotion and gave the precise corresponding amount of *prema*.

*ye yathā mām prapadyante
tāms tathaiva bhajāmy aham*

In the *Bhagavad-gīta* (4.11), Kṛṣṇa says, “As one worships Me, I reciprocate in precisely the same way. I will not give more, and I will not give less.”

And there is one more point here: Kṛṣṇa gave *rasa* only according to the specific type of vessel one possessed. To those in *sānta-bhāva* He was seen as Brahman, to those in *dāsya-bhāva* He was seen as Prabhu and to those in the moods of *sakhya* and *vātsalya* He gave *rasa* accordingly. But a vessel was necessary.

When the same Kṛṣṇa descended five-hundred years ago as the most munificent Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, He broke this routine. It was as if He was saying, “Where will you all get the vessels? There is no need. Just come to Me and I will give you the vessel, the *rasa* and the *prema*.” This is the special mercy of Caitanya Mahāprabhu. He broke this rule, *ye yathā mām prapadyante*. “I will give *kṛṣṇa-prema* to whoever comes to Me, even if they desire something material. Even if someone approaches Me with a *bhāva* worth only one *paisā*, I will give him *prema*.” The great mercy of Caitanya Mahāprabhu is that He not only gave the container, but He gave the highest category of *prema* which even Kṛṣṇa could not give.

Why could Kṛṣṇa not give such *prema*? Kṛṣṇa was the enjoyer, the *puruṣa*. He gave service to Himself. But Caitanya Mahāprabhu is the dark form of Kṛṣṇa covered by the golden hue of Śrīmatī Rādhikā. Therefore His activities are Rādhā’s, although underneath the surface is Kṛṣṇa’s body. Here Kṛṣṇa is not independent. Who is independent? Rādhikā has the independence here. Kṛṣṇa’s mind is completely covered with Rādhikā’s *bhāva* and His body is covered by Her body. Therefore whatever Caitanya Mahāprabhu manifests—such as His crying out, “*Kṛṣṇa! Kṛṣṇa!*”—all comes from Śrīmatī Rādhikā. Kṛṣṇa is completely covered with Her *bhāva*. But in *kṛṣṇa-līlā*, Kṛṣṇa was not covered by the *bhāva* of Rādhikā. As Rasarāja, Kṛṣṇa can relish *rasa*, but He wants to relish the *bhāva* of Rādhikā, *mahābhāva*. Therefore He begged Her for Her *bhāva*. So Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa came together in combined form as Mahāprabhu. Thus whatever is given by Mahāprabhu is of such a nature that even Kṛṣṇa cannot give it.

What is that which had never been given before? *Anarpita carīm cirāt karuṇayāvatirṇah kalau*. Accepting the *bhāva* of Rādhikā, accepting Her bodily hue and being full of mercy, Kṛṣṇa has come to this world as Mahāprabhu to give one specific *bhāva* which had never been given before. What is that *bhāva*? *Unnatojjvala-rasām svabhakti-śrīyam*—this *unnatojjvala-bhāva* is none other than *parakīyā-bhāva*.

In the *Ujjvala-nīlamanī*, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has explained all of this in detail. Rādhikā is the best among all the *gopīs*. Becoming maddened in Her *bhāva*, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu descended. The beauty of Her *bhāva* is like the beauty of a creeper. A creeper always has leaves. If a creeper were to be without leaves and *mañjarīs* (buds), it would be bare and therefore not beautiful. Creepers have many blossoming leaves, fruits and *mañjarīs* which tremble in a gentle breeze, and due to this they are beautiful. The beauty of Rādhikā’s *bhāva* means the *dāsī-bhāva* of the *gopīs*, *unnatojjvala-rasām svabhakti-śrīyam*. This is the item which Mahāprabhu came to bestow which had never been given before.

There have been many great *ācāryas* like Madhvācārya, Rāmanuja, Viṣṇusvāmī and Nimbarka, and before them there were great, great *ṛṣis* like Nārada, Śukadeva Gosvāmī, Paraśara, Ṛṣabhadeva and Kapiladeva. What did they give? Did anyone give this *bhāva* which Mahāprabhu gave? When not even Kṛṣṇa could give it, how could anyone else? But Rūpa Gosvāmī has delineated in his writings the precise same *bhāva* which Mahāprabhu brought to this world. And what did Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja come to give? What did he want to relish? What was his main objective? That we must discuss, and through discussing it the whole point of why he came into this world will become clear.

As long as Māyāvāda philosophy exists—“*Aham brahmāsmi*: I am Brahman, *tattvam asi*: you are also the same”—pure *bhakti* cannot be easily propagated. Māyāvāda must

be removed, and to remove it, Madhvācārya, Rāmānuja, Viṣṇusvāmī and other ācāryas worked very hard. They also all preached *vaidhī-bhakti* by which one can easily go to Vaikuṅṭha. But what did Rūpa Gosvāmī come to give? He came especially to give the *bhāva* of Mahāprabhu. He delineated the process of pure *bhakti*, but in doing so his main purpose was to give the *bhāva* of Mahāprabhu. Thus we pray:

*śrī-caitanya mano 'bhīṣṭaṁ sthāpitaṁ yena bhūtale
svayaṁ rūpaḥ kadā mahyaṁ dadāti sva-padāntikam*

“When will Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, who has established within this material world the mission to fulfil the desire of Caitanya Mahāprabhu, give me shelter at his lotus feet?”

Bhaktivedānta Svāmī understood that *bhāva* which Caitanya Mahāprabhu came to give, and to give it and establish it he worked his whole life. Svāmījī went to the Western countries and preached, and he also beautifully translated *Bhagavad-gītā*, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* into English. He preached to the entire world. But what was his main goal? Was the *bhakti* preached by Rāmānuja his objective, or was it the refutation of the Māyāvāda philosophy of Śaṅkarācārya? He refuted Māyāvāda philosophy vigorously, but is that really why he came? Was distributing the knowledge given in the *Bhagavad-gītā* the main goal of his life? Did he come only to give the teaching of the *Gītā* that “I am not this body”?

To give what he really wanted to give he first had to clear the path, and this took some time. In his last days, Svāmījī expressed his real intention: “Govardhana, please give me residence near you.” Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura prays:

*yatraiva kṛṣṇo vṛṣabhānu-putryā
dānam grhītuṁ kalahaṁ vitene
śruteḥ sprhā yatra mahaty ataḥ śrī-
govardhano me diśatām abhīṣṭam*

Śrī Govardhanāṣṭaka 3

“At Śrī Govardhana there is a place called Dānaghāṭī where Śrī Kṛṣṇa engaged in a lover’s quarrel with Śrī Vṛṣabhānu-nandinī Śrī Rādhikā in order to extract some tax from Her. As soon as the *rasika* Vaiṣṇavas see that place, an intense longing arises in their hearts to hear the narration of that quarrel. May that Śrī Govardhana fulfil all my desires.”

Svāmījī’s desire was especially to go to Govardhana. In all of Vraja-maṇḍala, Gokula is the best because Gokula is where Kṛṣṇa was ‘born’ from the womb of Yaśodā and where He performed His childhood pastimes. In Gokula there is a multitude of cows, *gopīs* and *gopas*. And the main *gopa* is Kṛṣṇa. He resides in Gokula, which includes Nandagrāma, Varṣāṇā, Kāmyavana and Vṛndāvana. In all of Gokula, Vṛndāvana is the best, and in Vṛndāvana, Govardhana is the best. In all of Govardhana, the two eyes, Rādhā-kuṇḍa and Śyāma-kuṇḍa, are the best. The sweetest, most attractive pastimes of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa take place there. Svāmījī wanted to go to Govardhana because there the best of all of Their pastimes, the *rāsa-līlā*, takes place in a special way.

In Vṛndāvana, this rāsa is called *pañcāyatī* (open, public) because it includes *sādhana-siddha gopīs* as well as *nitya-siddha gopīs*. Because so many different categories of *gopīs* participate, Rādhikā's desires cannot be completely fulfilled. In this situation, Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's most intimate pastimes cannot be performed. Only in that solitary place where even Candrāvalī cannot go can Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa perform Their most confidential pastimes with the help of Their most intimate *sakhīs*. This was not possible in the *rāsa-līlā* in Vṛndāvana, so Rādhikā left the *rāsa* dance in *māna* and Kṛṣṇa was compelled to follow Her. Thus the *rāsa* dance ended. Therefore Kṛṣṇa had to go to Govardhana for the performance of *Basantī-rāsa*. There He met Rādhikā in seclusion, in the *kuñjas*. Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī prays:

*pramada-madana-līlāḥ kandare kandare te
racayati nava-yūnor-dvandvam asminn-amandam
iti kila kalanārthaṁ lagna-kastad-dvayor me
nija-nikaṭa-nivāsaṁ dehi govardhana! tvam*

Śrī Govardhana-vāsa-prārthāna-dāśakam 2

“O Govardhana! Please grant me a dwelling near your side where I can easily witness the youthful lovers Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa performing especially ecstatic amorous pastimes within all of your caves.”

In Vṛndāvana all the *gopīs* participate in the *pañcāyatī-rāsa*. But at Govardhana *svarūpa-śakti* is manifested in a special way and only particular *sakhīs* like Lalitā, Viśākhā, Citrā and Campakalātā, who are very close to Rādhikā's *bhāva*, take part. Thus Kṛṣṇa enjoys with Rādhikā in the *kuñjas* where even Candrāvalī and her *sakhīs* cannot go. There Rādhikā and Kṛṣṇa can enjoy freely according to Their desires. There is no such freedom in Vṛndāvana.

Govardhana not only provides various types of *kuñjas* for the service of Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, but he also provides various kinds of fruits for Them to relish. He provides Rādhā-kuṇḍa, Śyāma-kuṇḍa, Govinda-kuṇḍa, Mānasī-gaṅgā, Kusuma-sarovara, and Surabhi-kuṇḍa to supply drinking water not only for Them, but also for the cows, *sakhās* and *sakhīs*. With his red stones he provides mineral dyes so Kṛṣṇa can paint His body different colours. There is no pastime which is not enacted there, and Girirāja is the witness to them all. Who says so? Śrīmatī Rādhikā speaks this from Her own mouth. The *gopīs* saw that only Girirāja could fulfil their desires, therefore they approached Govardhana and said:

*hantāyam adrir abalā hari-dāsa-varyo
yad-rāma-kṛṣṇa-caraṇa-sparaśa-pramodaḥ
mānaṁ tanoti saha-go-gaṇayoḥ tayor yat
pānīya-sūyavasa-kandara-kandamūlaiḥ*

Śrīmad-Bhāg. 10.21.18

“This Govardhana Hill is the best of all those who are known as Hari-dāsa because he is feeling great jubilation from the touch of the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma. With

great respect Govardhana is worshipping Them by providing all Their necessities such as caves, fruits, flowers and water for Their pleasure, and for the pleasure of Their cowherd friends, cows and calves.”

There are three personalities who are known as Hari-dāsa: Yudhiṣṭhira Mahārāja, Uddhavajī and Girirāja Govardhana. Did Kṛṣṇa ever go to Nārada’s *āśrama*, call him a friend or drive the horses for his chariot? Did He lie for him? Did He call him, “Sakhā! Sakhā!” while touching his shoulder? Never. Kṛṣṇa offers *praṇāma* unto Yudhiṣṭhira Mahārāja, and Yudhiṣṭhira Mahārāja embraces Kṛṣṇa and calls Him ‘Sakhā’. Sometimes Kṛṣṇa becomes his servant. Once Nārada came to Yudhiṣṭhira Mahārāja’s palace and began to praise him: “Just see! Bhagavān has incarnated and is hiding Himself in your house. So we all take the opportunity to visit you. You are most fortunate!”

On one occasion Yudhiṣṭhira Mahārāja said to Kṛṣṇa, “Prabhu, please give me one boon.”

Kṛṣṇa laughed and said, “Why are you asking Me for a boon? Even Prahlāda did not accept any boon from Me, and he is only My ordinary devotee. He said that if he ever desires a boon, he will let Me know.” Thus Kṛṣṇa spoke in great fun.

Yudhiṣṭhira replied, “No, Prabhuji, please do not cheat me. I want one boon from You.”

“What?”

“I want to marry the most beautiful woman in the world.”

“This is confusing. Everybody wants to give up their connection with the material world to come to Me, yet you desire to marry a beautiful woman. So be it. What else do you want?”

“I desire that there should be no other kingdom with greater opulence than ours in the entire world.”

Kṛṣṇa was a little astonished and said, “Why are you asking this?”

“I am asking this because people are afraid to worship You, because they think, ‘If we worship Kṛṣṇa, He will snatch away all our riches and make us beggars on the street, leaving us without even a *kaupīna* to wear. He will make us like Śukadeva Gosvāmī.’”

Due to this fear people generally don’t worship Kṛṣṇa—only poor people worship Him. Everyone is afraid that, “We may lose everything.” When Kṛṣṇa bestows His mercy on someone and accepts him, He takes away all their wealth. Therefore everyone worships he who has a long trunk, Gaṇeśa, or Dūrga, Śaṅkara or any other demigod. They are afraid to worship Kṛṣṇa.

So Yudhiṣṭhira Mahārāja continued, “Therefore if You give me the greatest opulence and the most beautiful wife, people will say, ‘Oh, Yudhiṣṭhira Mahārāja attained such wonderful opulence and such a beautiful wife like Draupadī to help in the household’. Then everyone will no longer be afraid and will start to worship You. Therefore Prabhu, please give me all this.”

Now tell me, can Prahlāda’s imagination stretch so far? Even Hanumān’s imagination cannot stretch so far. Therefore Yudhiṣṭhira Mahārāja is a better devotee than either Prahlāda or Hanumān. He wants everyone to worship Kṛṣṇa and he wants the pleasure of Kṛṣṇa only. This is why he is included within the category of Hari-dāsa.

Amongst those who are Hari-dāsa, Uddhava is higher still. Kṛṣṇa did not send Arjuna or Yudhiṣṭhira to Vraja. Who did He send to associate with His most intimate beloved? He sent Uddhava because Uddhava’s heart and Kṛṣṇa’s heart are one, and also because

Kṛṣṇa—for a very special reason—did not want to go to Vṛndāvana Himself. Kṛṣṇa thought, “If I go there, Rādhikā’s sorrow will merely increase. Even when She is together with Me, She feels separation. But if I stay away, She will become so absorbed in feelings of separation from Me that She will feel that I am together with Her. She will feel great happiness in embracing the *tamāla* tree, and She will eat, drink and decorate Herself. Therefore it is better that I stay away. Her pleasure is My pleasure.”

Then afterwards Kṛṣṇa thought, “I cannot live without Her. I require a friend who can speak about the *gopīs* and thus mitigate My sorrow. I do not see any such person in Mathurā. If someone were to study *prema* in the school where I Myself accepted the *gopīs* as teachers and studied, and if he were to pass the examination there, then I could speak with him. He could speak on My level and thereby give solace to My heart. Otherwise it is not possible.”

Therefore He sent Uddhava to Vraja. Why Uddhava? Uddhava is very near to the *bhāva* of the *gopīs*. Yudhiṣṭhira is far away in the mood of *aiśvarya* but in Uddhava the moods of *aiśvarya* and *mādhurya* are balanced. In that devotee in whom the moods of *aiśvarya* and *mādhurya* are both present, *vraja-bhāva* is very close. *Vraja-bhāva* is not actually there, but it is close. Kṛṣṇa thought “If Uddhava learns there, I will be able to speak with him about *prema*. Then he may understand when I speak about the *gopīs*.”

Uddhava went there and studied in that school where Lalitā and Viśākhā are teachers and the headmistress is Śrīmatī Rādhikā. He went there, offered *praṇāma*, received the *mantra* and studied for a long time, about ten months. When the course was completed, the *gopīs* sent him back: “Now you can return—you have passed the examination.” Then Uddhava returned to Mathurā and met with Kṛṣṇa. Therefore Uddhava is better than Yudhiṣṭhira.

But who is millions of times better than both of them? Girirāja Govardhana. Can Uddhava enter the *kuñjas* where intimate service is being rendered to Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa? No. When Uddhava first arrived in Vṛndāvana, Śrīmatī Rādhikā noticed a black bee and began speaking to it, considered it to be a black messenger from Kṛṣṇa. At this time She did not even see Uddhava. Uddhava simply offered *praṇāma* and hid. The *gopīs* did not even see him, nor did they speak to him. They spoke to the bee, as is described in Bhramara-gīta. What could Uddhava possibly say to the *gopīs*? He was simply astonished to see their character. But he became deeply absorbed in what he heard and his life became successful. Uddhava thought, “Even if I must become a blade of grass to obtain this *bhāva*, then it must be done.”

*āsām aho caraṇa-reṇu-juṣām ahaṁ syām
vṛndāvane kim api gulma-latauṣadhinām
yā dustyajam sva-janam ārya-patham ca hitvā
bhejur mukunda-padavim śrutibhir vimṛgyām*

Śrīmad-Bhāg. 10.47.61

“I pray to take birth as one of the bushes, creepers or herbs of Vṛndāvana on which the dust of the *gopīs*’ feet falls. The *gopīs* have performed the difficult task of abandoning their family members, as well as the Vedic path, to exclusively worship the lotus feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, which are sought after by the *śrutis* and even the Vedas themselves.”

“If in Vṛndāvana—no, not in Vṛndāvana—if at Girirāja Govardhana I could become a blade of grass and receive the dust of the *gopīs*’ feet on my head, I shall achieve the ultimate perfection and my life will be fully successful.” Therefore at Govardhana, near Kusuma-sarovara, is Uddhava-kunḍa. There Uddhava accepted birth as a blade of grass beneath a shrub and began performing penances for millions of years. Then he received *darśana* of the *gopīs*. When the *gopīs* would walk to Kṛṣṇa, the dust of their feet would fall on his head. He did not desire the footdust of any other devotees. Therefore he came to take shelter of Girirāja Govardhana. So, although he himself is included within the category of Hari-dāsa, Uddhava takes shelter of Govardhana. Uddhava is Hari-dāsa, but he also seeks the shelter of a greater Hari-dāsa.

When Kṛṣṇa goes to Govardhana with His friends, they drink water, eat fruits and take their cows out to graze. They roam in a carefree manner and enjoy their pastimes. Girirāja provides *kuñjas*, caves, water, fruits and flowers for Kṛṣṇa’s service. He is always ready to perform any service for Kṛṣṇa. The bushes and trees found within Govardhana’s *kuñjas* are actually his hairs standing erect in ecstasy. What are the water and waterfalls of Govardhana? They are his tears of love when he cries in the ecstasy of *kṛṣṇa-prema*. Everything of Govardhana is saturated with *kṛṣṇa-prema*. And when Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa perform Their pastimes there, even in the most secluded place, Govardhana sees. Therefore Girirāja Govardhana receives the maximum mercy from Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.

Some devotees worship Govardhana as Kṛṣṇa Himself, but in the Gauḍīya *sampradāya* we worship him as a great devotee, not as Bhagavān, because as a devotee he can bestow the *prema-rasa* which is displayed there. If he is Bhagavān, then he cannot give that *prema* which Rādhikā and Her girl friends and even their devotees can give. Therefore devotees always aspire to go to Girirāja Govardhana, who has witnessed all of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes.

Devotees know that Girirāja Govardhana can bestow that *prema* which is relished by Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa and which Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu descended to distribute and to taste Himself. Therefore Svāmījī, like Rūpa Gosvāmī, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Prabhupāda and my own worshipable *gurudeva*, Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, also wanted residence near Govardhana. Govardhana is the best place in Vraja for both *sādhakas* and *siddhas*. If a *sādhaka* who does not have *prema* does *bhajana* there, he will get *prema*, and if a perfected devotee goes there, he will relish Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa’s *nitya-līlā*. He will also receive *darśana* of the *mahābhāva* which is most dear to Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa and which he himself also aspires to attain. It cannot be attained anywhere else.

There are three personalities in Vṛndāvana who can give *prema*: Lalitā, Girirāja Govardhana, and the Yamunā Therefore devotees take shelter of these three and thus try to become eternal maidservants of Rādhikā and gain Her favour. I also desire to take shelter of Girirāja Govardhana with these aspirations in mind.

*yatraiva gaṅgām anu nāvi rādhām
ārohya madhye tu nimagna-naukaḥ
kṛṣṇo hi radhānugalo babhau sa
govardhano me diśatām abhīṣtam*

Śrī Govardhanāṣṭaka 7

“In Mānasī-gaṅgā, which has arisen from the heart of Śrī Govardhana, Śrī Kṛṣṇa induced Śrī Rādhikā to sit in His boat. In the middle of the lake Kṛṣṇa nearly caused the boat to sink. Out of fear, Śrī Svāmījī threw Her arms around His neck and tightly embraced Him. May that Śrī Govardhana fulfil all my desires.”

There is a lake at Govardhana known as Mānasī-gaṅgā. It has now dried up somewhat and shrunk in size, but previously it was very broad and had to be crossed by boat. Once upon a time at Mānasī-gaṅgā, night had fallen and there was only one boatman present there. He was looking very tired, standing there with his boat. Some *gopīs* came and requested him to take them across. He said, “I have no time. It is evening now and the sky is clouded. There is the possibility of a storm. My boat is also very old and has holes in it. I am also tired, and I cannot take you across.” But they insisted, so the boatman said, “Alright, I will take you across, but only one at a time, not all together.”

One principal *gopī* was to cross first. She boarded the boat, and the boatman guided the boat to the middle of the lake. Then the boatman said, “Look, get ready. My boat has many holes in it and I see water coming in. Come to the centre of the boat.” When the boat became filled with even more water, the boatman said, “Get ready to jump. You know how to swim?”

“No, I don’t know how to swim!”

“Then take off all Your unnecessary clothes and throw them overboard. Otherwise, if Your clothes get tangled as You try to swim, You will drown. So get ready.”

In this pastime, Kṛṣṇa the boatman is playing so wonderfully, and at that point Rādhikā became frightened and caught hold of Him. This is precisely what Kṛṣṇa desired. Such attractive *kṛṣṇa-līlā* is enacted at Girirāja Govardhana. I pray, “Hey Girirāja, please fulfil my desire to witness these pastimes.”

Svāmījī also wanted to go to Govardhana with the same idea in mind. His life’s ideal and principal desire was to give this *prema* to the world, but first he had to spend a long time in cutting away the jungle and in preaching *vaidhī-bhakti*. He desired to translate the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* in full and especially to elaborately describe the pastimes narrated in the Tenth Canto. But Bhagavān did not agree and He called him back to His *nitya-līlā*. Perhaps Kṛṣṇa did not want him to remain in separation from Him any longer. Therefore Svāmījī’s desire to go to Girirāja Govardhana was fulfilled by Bhagavān’s calling him back to Girirāja Govardhana in Goloka-Vṛndāvana. Girirāja Govardhana is our primary shelter because *prema-bhāva* is the highest there. Svāmījī came to relish this pinnacle of *kṛṣṇa-prema* and to distribute it to the residents of this world.



World Vaiṣṇava Association Lecture—4 March 1996

First of all, I offer my faith millions of times in the form of handfuls of flowers unto the lotus feet of my supremely worshipable *gurudeva*, *om viṣṇupāda* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja. Thereafter I greet the assembled *sannyāsīs* and other Vaiṣṇavas. Just now Śrīpad Sajjana Mahārāja has explained that we are seated at Śrīvāsa-aṅgana which is within the boundaries of Antardvīpa Śrī Māyāpura where Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu performed *saṅkīrtana* with His associates. Just as there is a *rāsa-sthalī* in Vṛndāvana, similarly this place is the *saṅkīrtana rāsa-sthalī*. All Vaiṣṇavas know that Caitanya Mahāprabhu is Kṛṣṇa Himself. Though Kṛṣṇa is the *viṣaya* of *prema*, still He accepted the mood and complexion of Śrīmatī Rādhikā in order to taste three particular desires. In addition He wanted to distribute the *parama-durlabha-prema*, that divine love which is rare even for Brahmā and Nārada. He wanted to give to the world that *prema* which was not given in one entire *kalpa* of Brahmā. What is that *prema*? *Unnatojjvala-rasa*, the splendid rendering of service to Śrīmatī Rādhikā from a position as Her maidservant. This is what is most beneficial for the living entities. Also it was time for the *yuga-dharma* to be given; the prime religion of Kali-yuga is *nāma-saṅkīrtana*. Most people had become atheists, so this was also one of the reasons for the appearance of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Therefore Śrīla Advaita Ācārya called for Him especially at that particular time. Caitanya Mahāprabhu is none other than Kṛṣṇa Himself having taken the mood and complexion of Śrīmatī Rādhikā. He appeared as Śacī-nandana Gaurahari and distributed *harināma* to the *jīvas* in the form of a *prema-rajju*, a rope of love. He did not consider whether they were human beings or animals; He gave this *prema* to all, regardless of their caste and creed.

Thus, for the above mentioned reasons, Caitanya Mahāprabhu appeared in this world in the home of Śacīmātā and Jagannātha Miśrā, which is situated nearby here and is known as the *madhya-sthalī* or *yoga-pīṭha* of Antardvīpa. He appeared here in Antardvīpa where Brahmā has performed thousands of fire sacrifices. This island is actually known as Antardvīpa Māyāpura because Caitanya Mahāprabhu appeared in Brahmā's heart. So He took birth here and after taking *sannyāsa* in Katwā, He went to Jagannātha Purī and from there He went on His tour of South India. After returning to Jagannātha Purī from South India, He went to Vṛndāvana. Wherever He went He preached *nāma* and *prema*. Upon seeing Him, even animals began to cry and started chanting *Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Hare Hare, Hare Rāma Hare Rāma Rāma Rāma Hare Hare*. Here in Navadvīpa also He gave *kṛṣṇa-prema* to fallen people like Jagāi and Madhāi. Mahāprabhu ordered everyone:

*yāre dekha, tāre kaha kṛṣṇa upadeśa
āmāra ājñāya guru hanā tarā' ei deśa*

“Whomever you meet you should instruct regarding the teachings of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. On My order become a *guru* and deliver the people of this land.”

And Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has written *bolo kṛṣṇa bhaja kṛṣṇa karo kṛṣṇa śikṣā*: “Chant *kṛṣṇa-nāma*, worship Kṛṣṇa and instruct others about Kṛṣṇa.” Do not speak about anything other than this and don’t let others speak about anything other than this. You should only sing “Hari-bol! Hari-bol! Hare Kṛṣṇa! Hare Kṛṣṇa!” Go to the door of every house and tell everyone to take *kṛṣṇa-nāma*. You should all chant *hari-nāma*, and to chant *harināma* there is no consideration of whether one is a Hindu, Muslim, Christian or whatever. Everyone should do it. Mahāprabhu started the *kīrtana* from just here and then proceeded to the home of Chand Kazi and defeated him. Then He took *sannyāsa* and travelled all over India preaching the holy name. In the end He became fully absorbed in the mood of Śrīmatī Rādhikā and tasted three sentiments:

*śrī-rādhāyāḥ praṇaya-mahimā kīḍṛso-vanayaivā-
svādyo yenādbhuta-madhurimā kīḍṛso vā madīyaḥ
saukhyam cāsyā mad-anubhavataḥ kīḍṛcam veti lobhāt
tad-bhāvāḍhyaḥ sacī garbha-sindhu harīnduḥ*

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta Ādi-līlā 1. 6

“What is the greatness of Śrī Rādhā’s love? What is that astonishing sweetness of Mine which She relishes through Her love? What is the happiness which She feels when She experiences My sweetness?” Being intensely desirous of tasting these three things, the moon of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, richly endowed with Her emotions, appeared from the ocean of the womb of Śrīmatī Śacīdevī.”

What is the nature of Śrīmatī Rādhikā’s *praṇaya*? What does *praṇaya* mean? In the progressive stages of devotion there are *śraddhā*, *niṣṭhā*, *ruci*, *āsakti*, *bhāva* and *prema*, followed by *sneha*, *māna* and *praṇaya*. It is very high; this *praṇaya* is not of this world. What is the nature of Rādhikā’s love towards Kṛṣṇa? How does Rādhikā become maddened by tasting the four sweetnesses of Kṛṣṇa, namely *nāma-mādhurī*, *rūpa-mādhurī*, *guṇa-mādhurī* and *līlā-mādhurī*? And after tasting these, what kind of pleasure does She derive? Kṛṣṇa tried His best to understand these things, but He failed. Why? Because He is the *viṣaya* of *prema* (the object of love). Śrīmatī Rādhikā is the *āśraya* of *prema* (the shelter of love), and that is why unless one takes the sentiment of the *āśraya*, it is not possible to taste these things. That is why Kṛṣṇa took the mood and complexion of Rādhikā and tasted all those sentiments in the Gambhīra. The mood of Śrīmatī Rādhikā is not to be given because no one is qualified to accept it. Only Rādhikā Herself can taste it. Mahāprabhu distributed only a drop of *anarpita carīm cirāt prema* to the world. This was not done by Śrī Rāmacandra, Dvārakādhīśa Kṛṣṇa or Mathureśa Kṛṣṇa, so what to speak of Nārāyaṇa and others? Kṛṣṇa weighed *prema* before giving it (*Bhagavad-gītā* 4.11):

*ye yathā mām prapadyante
tāms tathaiva bhajāmy aham*

Kṛṣṇa first looked to see how much *prema* should be given to someone. He gave *prema* as much as one performed *bhajana* of Him. If some one did *bhajana* worth twenty-five *paisā*, than He gave them twenty-five *paisā* worth of *prema*. But what did Caitanya Mahāprabhu do?

*'kṛṣṇa-nāma' kare aparādhher vicāra
kṛṣṇa balile aparādhīra nā haya vikāra*

Śrī Caitanya-cartāmṛta, Ādi-lilā 8.24

“There are offenses to be considered while chanting the name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Therefore genuine symptoms of spiritual ecstasy are not observed in persons who chant the name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa with offenses.”

*caitanya nityānande nāhi esaba vicāra
nāma laite prema dene, bahe āsrudhāra*

Śrī Caitanya-cartāmṛta, Ādi-lilā 8.31

“In chanting the holy names of Śrī Caitanya-Nityānanda there is no such consideration of offenses. One who takes shelter of Them and chants Their holy names with faith is very quickly purified of all previous offenses. When *kṛṣṇa-nāma* is then taken up by a person thus purified, Śrī Caitanya-Nityānanda bestow *prema* upon him and tears flow from his eyes.”

*yei ye māgaye, tāre deya āpana-dhana
gharma-vṛṣṭi sahe, ānera karaye rakṣaṇa*

Śrī Caitanya-cartāmṛta, Antya-lilā 20.24

“The tree delivers whatever wealth it possesses to anyone who requests something of it. It tolerates heat and rain and gives protection to others.”

Mahāprabhu gave this wealth and blessed the entire world. All the incarnations of Bhagavān came within Kṛṣṇa and now the same Kṛṣṇa, along with all those other incarnations, has come within Caitanya Mahāprabhu and He is the most magnanimous:

*namo mahā-vadānyāya kṛṣṇa-prema-pradāya te
kṛṣṇāya kṛṣṇa-caitanya-nāmne gaura-tviṣe namaḥ*

“I offer *praṇāma* unto Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who is Kṛṣṇa Himself. He has assumed the golden hue of Śrīmatī Rādhikā and is munificently distributing *kṛṣṇa-prema*.”

Mahāprabhu did not weigh *prema*. Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura writes: *emana dāyalo āra nahi tri-bhuvane kṛṣṇa prema aise dūra darśane*: “There is no one so merciful within the three worlds whose mere sight even from a distant place bestows *kṛṣṇa-prema*.” If someone takes *darśana* of Caitanya Mahāprabhu from a distance, even then he gets drowned in *prema*. Not only this, Mahāprabhu has even provided the container, meaning the qualification, to those who didn’t have one and made them drink this *prema* to their full capacity.

*caitanyāvatāre vahe premāmṛta-vanyā
saba jīva preme bhāse, prthivī haila dhanyā*

*e-vanyāya ye nā bhāse, sei jīva chāra
koṭi-kalpe kabhutāranāhika nistāra*

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta Antya-līlā 3.254, 255

“A flood of the nectar of divine love is flowing due to the advent of Śrī Caitanya. All living entities are floating in this inundation of *prema*, and therefore the Earth has become blessed. Those *jīvas* who do not float in this inundation are most condemned. They cannot be delivered for millions of *kalpas*.”

Fortunate are those who are able to drink a full bowl of this *prema* and their lives are fully successful. Otherwise they will not receive this opportunity again even after millions and millions of births. Now all of you also have this opportunity! In the recent past, Mahāprabhu’s associates such as Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura and others appeared in this world. We are most fortunate to come in this line of *paramparā*. But unfortunately, due to the influence of Kali and due to their intelligence being covered, many people are quarrelling with each other for the fulfilment of their selfish motives. But an effort should be made so that all the Vaiṣṇavas can unite once again. It will be very nice if we can all assemble together under the one shelter of Caitanya Mahāprabhu. In his last words, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī said that, “All of you unite together under the guidance of one *āśraya* and serve the *viṣaya*, Kṛṣṇa. That *āśraya* is Śrīmatī Rādhikā or Baladeva Prabhu, Nityānanda Prabhu. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Prabhupāda was Their representative. So under that same *āśraya* we will all serve *viṣaya*, Kṛṣṇa or Caitanya Mahāprabhu, no matter if thousands of obstacles come or if thousands of people apportion blame to us. Just as Haridāsa Ṭhākura was beaten in twenty-two market places, and Prahlāda Mahārāja went through so many tests, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Prabhupāda went through troublesome conditions in Kuliya-grāma as you all know. That same Prabhupāda says that no matter if thousands of obstacles or condemnations come, we will even give up our lives in order to serve *viṣaya*-Kṛṣṇa under one *āśraya*. *Sei janya milana*—for this reason only there is meeting.

Prabhupāda said that there are so many necessities in this world. We have not come in this world to fulfil those necessities. While we are living it is important that the goal of our lives should be realised. What is that goal? By nature we are servants of Kṛṣṇa. Some accept this truth and some do not. Those who don’t accept this will meet disaster due to their sin. But we are all *kṛṣṇa-dāsa*. Thus we fix this idea as the goal of our lives. Our only duty is to fulfil the *manobhīṣṭha*, innermost desire, of Caitanya Mahāprabhu. That is why Prabhupāda said, “Don’t become *pañca-misālī* (mixed with five different thoughts); you can’t serve your Lord like this. Try to become pure Vaiṣṇavas, exclusive Vaiṣṇavas and truly possessionless Vaiṣṇavas. If we can perform *bhajana* under the guidance of our preceptors, then there is possibility of our well-being. Those who endeavour to please others, like *pañca-misālīs*, are not *gurus*. But these days these kind of people are found in abundance. Most of us are after *kanaka*, *kāminī* and *pratiṣṭhā* (wealth, women and fame). We are deviating from our primary objective. Otherwise, if

we all are really desiring to fulfil the *manobhīṣṭha* of Caitanya Mahāprabhu, why does quarrelling take place? If I do *kṛṣṇa-bhajana* under the guidance of *gurudeva*, then where is the possibility of quarrelling? If we can take the words of Śrīla Prabhupāda and remain united, it will be very nice. What is the *vicāra*, conception, of Śrīla Prabhupāda? Only Mahāprabhu’s conception is the real *rūpānuga* conception. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, Sanātana Gosvāmī, Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, Jīva Gosvāmīpāda, afterwards Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī, Vṛndāvana dāsa Ṭhākura, thereafter Śyāmānanda Prabhu, Śrīnivāsa Ācārya, Narottama Ṭhākura, thereafter Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa, Śrīla Jagannātha dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, Prabhupāda and afterwards his disciples—we should accept their conception. Leaving aside our *guru*, there cannot be any proper line of conception. “I only accept my *guru* and I don’t accept the *guru-paramparā*. I will not read the literatures of Śrīla Rūpā Gosvāmī, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura and I won’t respect them”— what will be our fate if we associate with people of such a mentality? If together we can preach the *vāṇī* (words) of Śrī Rūpā and Raghunātha, if together we can preach the *vāṇī* of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda and Śrīla Prabhupāda, then there will be benefit in coming together. Otherwise there is no point in meeting together with the desire for politics, for becoming *guru* or for acquiring name and fame. In one of Prabhupāda’s purports on *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, it is mentioned that Kṛṣṇa never leaves Vṛndāvana. Rādhikā also doesn’t ever leave Vṛndāvana. He clearly states that Vrajendra-nandana, Śyāmasundara, Rādhā-kānta, Rādhā-ramaṇa is far superior to Rukmiṇī or Satyabhāmā together with Kṛṣṇa. Who is our worshipable Deity? Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura has written:

*ārādhyo bhagavān vrajeṣa- tanayas tad-dhāma vṛndāvanam
ramyā kācid upāsanaṁ vraja-vadhū-vargena yā kalpitā
śrīmad-bhāgavatam pramāṇa-amalam premā pumartho
mahān śrī-caitanya mahāprabhor matam idaṁ tatrādarō naḥ paraḥ*

“The Supreme Lord Vrajendra-nandana Śrī Kṛṣṇa and His transcendental abode Śrī Vṛndāvana-dhāma are my worshipable objects. The most excellent method of worshipping Kṛṣṇa is that adopted by the *gopa-ramaṇīs*, the young wives of Vraja (*vraja-vadhū*). The *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is the flawless and most authoritative scripture, and *kṛṣṇa-prema* is the fifth and highest achievement of human life beyond *dharma*, *artha*, *kāma*, and *mokṣa*. It is thus known as *pañcama-puruṣārtha* or *parama-puruṣārtha*. This is the opinion of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. We have supreme regard for this conclusion. We have no inclination or respect for any other misleading opinions.”

And if someone still utters Rādhā-Pārtha-sārathī* (as the name of his Deities) instead of Rādhā-Rādhā-ramaṇa, then Prabhupāda says that person is a *mūrkhā*, a fool

*In Chapter Thirty of *Teachings of Lord Caitanya*, A.C. Bhaktidevānta Svāmī writes, “Even the transcendental relationship experienced by a devotee of Nārāyaṇa in Vaikuṅṭha is incomplete in that it is not realisation of a relationship with Kṛṣṇa in Goloka-Vṛndāvana. The devotees of Kṛṣṇa do not relish devotional service to Nārāyaṇa because devotional service to Kṛṣṇa is so attractive that Kṛṣṇa’s devotees do not desire to worship any other form. Thus the *gopīs* of Vṛndāvana do not like to see Kṛṣṇa as the husband of Rukmiṇī, nor do they address Him as Rukmiṇī-ramaṇa. In Vṛndāvana, Kṛṣṇa is addressed as Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, meaning Kṛṣṇa, the property of Rādhārāṇī. Although the husband of Rukmiṇī and

who doesn't understand anything. Such people will speak whatever their minds dictate. We should strictly follow our *guru-paramparā* and the words of Caitanya Mahāprabhu, then it is possible that we can come closer and stay together. And there is another group of people who keep on saying that the *jīva* has fallen from Goloka-Vṛndavana, but this is not approved by Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī. We should accept what Jīva Gosvāmī has said on this issue.

*yad gatvā na nivartante
tad-dhāma paramam mama*

Bhagavad-gītā 15.6

“Those who attain that supreme abode never return to this material world.”

But the idea that “after attaining that supreme abode, we will again fall down into this world”? This is a complete misconception; this is not our conception. If there is a possibility that even after attaining residence in that *dhāma* we will again fall down, then what is the value in ever going there? That is why before preaching we must be conversant with the conception of Rūpa Gosvāmī, the conception of Jīva Gosvāmī and the conception of our entire *guru-paramparā* so that the pure uncontaminated message of the *paramparā* will be broadcast. *Prema-dharma* devoid of envy should be preached. The root of such *prema-dharma* should be:

*tṛṇād api sunīcena
taror api sahiṣṇunā
amāninā mānadena
kīrtanīyaḥ sadā hariḥ*

“Thinking oneself to be even lower and more worthless than insignificant grass which has been trampled beneath everyone's feet, being more tolerant than a tree, being prideless and offering respect to all others according to their respective positions, one should continuously chant the holy name of Śrī Hari.”

Rādhā's Kṛṣṇa are on the same level in the ordinary sense, still, in the spiritual world, the names indicate different understandings of various aspects of Kṛṣṇa's transcendental personality. If one equalises Rukmiṇī-ramaṇa, Rādhā-ramaṇa, Nārāyaṇa or any other name of the Supreme Lord, he commits the fault of overlapping tastes, which is technically called *rasābhāsa*. Those who are expert devotees do not accept such amalgamations which are against the conclusions of pure devotional service.”

Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī writes again in his commentary on *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā* 8.90. “...the devotee of Kṛṣṇa who is attached to the sublime attractive feature of the Lord does not consider Nārāyaṇa very important. When the *gopīs* sometimes saw Kṛṣṇa in the form of Nārāyaṇa, they were not very attracted to Him. The *gopīs* never addressed Kṛṣṇa as Rukmiṇī-ramaṇa. Kṛṣṇa's devotees in Vṛndāvana address him as Rādhā-ramaṇa, Nanda-nandana and Yaśodā-nandana, but not as Vasudevā-nandana or Devakī-nandana. Although according to the material conception, Nārāyaṇa, Rukmiṇī-ramaṇa and Kṛṣṇa are one and the same, in the spiritual world one cannot use the name of Kṛṣṇa in the place of Rukmiṇī-ramaṇa or Nārāyaṇa. If one does out of a poor fund of knowledge, his mellow with the Lord becomes spiritually faulty and is called *rasābhāsa*, an overlapping of transcendental mellows, The advanced devotee who has actually realised the transcendental features of the Lord will not commit the mistake of creating a *rasābhāsa* situation by using one name for another. Because of the influence of Kali-yuga, there is much *rasābhāsa* in the name of extravagance and liberal-mindedness. Such fanaticism is not very much appreciated by pure devotees.”

If one doesn't have this attitude, then what kind of Vaiṣṇava does he claim to be? If we can't give proper respect to advanced Vaiṣṇavas, such as in passing resolutions saying, "Do not go to this Vaiṣṇava", is it *vaiṣṇava-dharma*? Then is it coming together? Therefore we should always respect Vaiṣṇavas. When we are supposed to give respect to all the *jīvas*, then what to speak of respecting all Vaiṣṇavas? That is why this offence is number one in the list of offences to the holy name. Be very careful never to commit such an offence. Instead we should always try to respect Vaiṣṇavas. This is where we start from in the very beginning. One who is unable to give proper respect to the Vaiṣṇavas has not even come into the *madhyama-adhikārī* stage. He is only a *kaniṣṭha-adhikārī*. Taking this conception of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, we can preach His glories all over the world and for these reasons it is essential that we should unite. We must give up our selfish desires and then only we can become qualified to preach the *vāṇī* of Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Prabhupāda under their guidance. Vaiṣṇavas like *parama-pūjyapāda* Bhakti Vilāsa Tīrtha Mahārāja, *parama-pūjyapāda* Śrīdhara Mahārāja, *parama-pūjyapāda* Mādhava Mahārāja, *parama-pūjyapāda* Naimi Mahārāja, *parama-pūjyapāda* Giri Mahārāja, *parama-pūjyapāda* Vaikhānas Mahārāja, my Guru Mahārāja and Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja are all *vaibhava*, extensions, of Prabhupāda. When Prabhupāda descends into this world, his associates also join him. But if we criticise one of these personalities and then respect another, it is not good. We should give proper respect to everyone and try to preach *vaiṣṇava-dharma*. We should also sit down together and finalise the accurate dates for fasting according to our Vaiṣṇava calendar for both within India and outside India. Everyone should follow one path. After agreeing on these points, we can try to preach together in a harmonious atmosphere all over the world. Then our meeting together will bear some fruits. We should carefully see that this conference should not become a playground for politics. I end my speech here by offering a humble prayer at the lotus feet of Caitanya Mahāprabhu that He may bestow mercy upon us so that we can always respect all Vaiṣṇavas, so that His message which has already been spread all over the world should grow more and more, and so that we will always remain united.



श्रीगान्धर्वा-संप्रार्थनाष्टकम्
Śrī Gāndharvā-samprārthanāṣṭakam

Composed by
Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī

वृन्दावने विहरतोरिह केलि-कुञ्जे
मत्त-द्विप-प्रवर-कौतुक-विभ्रमेण ।
संदर्श्यस्व युवयोर्वदनारविन्द-
द्वन्द्वं विधेहि मयि देवि! कृपां प्रसीद ॥१॥

*vṛndāvane viharator iha keli-kuñje
matta-dvipa-pravara-kautuka-vibhrameṇa
sandarśyasva yuvayor vadanāravinda-
dvandvaṁ vidhehi mayi devi! kṛpāṁ prasīda (1)*

O Devi Rādhike! You and Śrī Kṛṣṇa are constantly enjoying Your ambrosial amorous pastimes in the love-groves of Vṛndāvana, like the intoxicated king of elephants sporting with His queen elephant. Therefore, O Gāndharvike! Be pleased with me and mercifully grant me the *darśana* of Your two lotus-like faces.

Commentary

Śrīmatī Rādhikā and Kṛṣṇa are always wandering, walking hand in hand through the leafy paths of Vṛndāvana and playing in the many beautiful *keli-kuñjas* (pleasure groves). And what do They play? Hide and seek! But not with Their bodies; how could Śrīmatī Rādhikā possibly hide Her effulgent body? Instead They play hide and seek with Their eyes, and as Their glances dart towards one another, They hide from these arrows shot from one another's eyes. These *keli-kuñjas* decorate the slopes of Govardhana, Saṅkeṭa, Rādhā-kuṇḍa, Nidhuvana and Sevā-kuñja. Rūpa Gosvāmī prays, “O Devi! Please! Will You grant me the *darśana* of You both together? Will I see Your smiling faces?”

हा देवि! काकुभर-गद्गदयाद्य वाचा
याचे निपत्य भुवि दण्डवद्भृष्टार्तिः ।
अस्य प्रसादमबुधस्य जनस्य कृत्वा
गान्धर्विके! निज-गणे गणनां विधेहि ॥२॥

*hā devi! kāku-bhara-gadgadayādyā vācā
yāce nipatya bhuvi daṇḍavad udbhaṭārtiḥ
asya prasādam abudhasya janasya kṛtvā
gāndharvike! nija-gaṇe gaṇanām vidhehi (2)*

O Devi Gāndharvike! In utter desperation I throw myself on the ground like a stick and with a choked voice humbly implore You to please be merciful to this fool and count me as one of Your own.

Commentary

Here Rūpa Gosvāmī prays, “O Devi! I am crying out to You! My words are coming out like nonsense, my voice is all choked up, and I am falling on the ground offering my *daṇḍavat-praṇāmas*. I am such a fool and I know nothing, but hey Gāndharvike! You should please hear my one request: that You write my name on Your heart as Your *pālyadāsī*.”

श्यामे! रमा-रमण-सुन्दरता-वरिष्ठ-
सौन्दर्य-मोहित-समस्त-जगज्जनस्य ।
श्यामस्य वाम-भुज-बद्ध-तनुं कदाहं
त्वामिन्दिरा-विरल-रूप-भरां भजामि? ॥३॥

*śyāme! ramā-ramaṇa-sundaratā-variṣṭha-
saundarya-mohita-samasta-jagaj-janasya
śyāmasya vāma-bhuja-baddha-tanuṁ kadāhaṁ
tvām indirā-virala-rūpa-bharām bhajāmi? (3)*

O Śrīmatī Śyāme! Your Master is even more charming than Nārāyaṇa Bhagavān and His beauty enchants the entire creation. You are always at His left side, embraced by His arm, and Your beauty cannot ever be equalled, even by that of Lakṣmī-devī. When will I have properly worshipped such beauty?

Commentary

Rūpa Gosvāmī prays, “O hey Śyāme! Ramā-ramaṇa Nārāyaṇa is very beautiful and we can plainly see that Kṛṣṇa is much, much more beautiful than He! Kṛṣṇa is so beautiful that everyone and everything is drawn to Him and captivated by Him. But just see! He Himself has become attracted to You! But Rādhe! You do not want to lie in His lap.

He is trying to embrace You, placing His left hand around Your waist, but You are struggling and saying ‘No, no, no’. You will not accept the shelter of His lap. Devi! When will I see Your face scowling in this way?”

त्वां प्रच्छदेन मुदिरच्छविना पिधाय
मञ्जीर-मुक्त-चरणां च विधाय देवि! ।
कुञ्जे व्रजेन्द्र-तनयेन विराजमाने
नक्तं कदा प्रमुदितामभिसारयिष्ये? ॥४॥

*tvām pracchadena mudira-cchavinā pidhāya
mañjīra-mukta-caraṇāṃ ca vidhāya devi!
kuñje vrajendra-tanayena virājamāne
naktam kadā pramuditām abhisārayiṣye? (4)*

O Devi Rādhike! When will I become Your *sakhī*, and pleasing You by dressing Your transcendental form in a raincloud-coloured *sārī* and removing the anklets from Your feet, send You off to a splendid *kuñja* for a nocturnal rendezvous with Nanda-nandana?

Commentary

Rūpa Mañjarī has many duties, and amongst all of them she is especially expert in dressing Śrīmatī Rādhikā in perfect accordance to the season. On full-moon nights she will dress Śrīmatī all in white cloth and rub Her skin with camphor so She shines as white as the full moon and will not be seen in the forest as She makes Her way to meet Śyāma.

The time is around midnight on the night of the dark moon. Vṛndā approaches Rādhikā saying, “O Rādhe! Do You know that Kṛṣṇa is waiting for You now and that He has sent me to bring You to Him? Rādhe, please come with me.”

But Rādhikā will not easily give Herself to Him. First She will want to know, “How much does He want Me?”

Rādhikā refuses to go to Him, saying, “No, I shall not come.” Kṛṣṇa wants Her very much, so seeing that Vṛndā has failed, He sends His friend Subala. Because Subala is very clever in delivering Kṛṣṇa’s love-laden heart-messages, he has become Kṛṣṇa’s dearest friend and most powerful ally in the matter of communicating with Śrīmatī Rādhikā.

After Kṛṣṇa persuades Rādhikā to meet with Him, Rādhikā calls Rūpa Mañjarī to Her side: “Hey Rūpa Mañjarī! I shall go to Him and you alone will go with Me. No other *sakhī* shall come tonight, but look, first some changes must be made!”

Rādhikā is wearing a bright red cloth over Her hips as well as a blue covering cloth which is spangled with gems in such a way that it sparkles as if it is sprinkled with stars.

On this dark night She would be easily seen from a great distance, so Rūpa is praying, “O Śrīmatī, O my Rādhā, You will order me, ‘Go and fetch My black clothes, and dress Me in them in such a way so that even if My own mother were to stand directly in front of Me, she would not see Me before her with My head bent down.’ Then You will tell me that Your anklets are tinkling like the sound of a swan and that I should wrap them tightly in cloth so that You may walk silently. After doing this, I will silently lead You to a different *kuñja* a little distance from where Kṛṣṇa is eagerly waiting. Then I will go to Him without shame and say, ‘Oh, She will not come to You tonight. She has refused to meet with You.’”

Rūpa will not let her beloved Svāminī meet with Him unless she is sure that He is sincere and will not take Her company for granted.

Hearing Rūpa Mañjarī’s words, Kṛṣṇa closes His eyes and sighs very deeply in great pain. Then, seeing His sincere eagerness to meet with Śrīmatī Rādhikā, Rūpa Mañjarī tells Him, “Put away all Your sorrow—She *is* coming!” After Rūpa Mañjarī leads Rādhikā into that *kuñja* and gives Her into His arms, she leaves Them there together and stands as a guard at the entrance of the *kuñja*, not only to prevent any unauthorised person from entering, but also in case Śrīmatī may call out for anything.

कुञ्जे प्रसून-कुल-कल्पित-केलि-तल्पे
संविष्टयोर्मधुर-नर्म-विलास-भाजोः ।
लोक-त्रयाभरणयोश्चरणाम्बुजानि
संवाहयिष्यति कदा युवयोर्जनोऽयम्? ॥५॥
kuñje prasūna-kula-kalpita-keli-talpe
saṁviṣṭayor madhura-narma-vilāsa-bhājoh
loka-trayābharaṇayoś caraṇāmbujāni
saṁvāhayiṣyati kadā yuvayor jano 'yam? (5)

O Devi! Within a *kuñja* You and Śrī Kṛṣṇa lie on a bed composed of varieties of flowers which is a playground for Your sweet amorous amusement. When will I receive the opportunity to serve the lotus feet of You and Your beloved, who together are the very adornment of the three worlds? Oh, when will such an auspicious day come?

Commentary

Rūpa Mañjarī prays, “O Prāṇa-priya! My Rādhā! After bringing You both together in that Saṅketa *kuñja*, I will collect many beautiful, soft and fragrant lotus flowers and petals to lay on Your bed. You will sit there together and, Rādhē! With Your right hand You will lovingly place *pāna* in the beautiful smiling mouth of Kṛṣṇa. Then You will start to enjoy many smiling, happy talks together. He will praise You whilst laughing, saying, ‘O My beloved! Dearest of My heart! How well You have cheated Jaṭilā and Kuṭilā!’ Smiling, You will reply, ‘And You! How nicely You have cheated Candrāvalī!’

Looking at me, You will say, ‘Just see how this *mañjarī* serves Us so nicely! And how much Paurṇamāsī and Lalitā have helped Us to meet!’

“At that time I shall be situated at Your feet, sometimes massaging them very softly and gently and sometimes massaging Kṛṣṇa’s feet. Sometimes I will have one hand for You and one for Him and massage You both together. Your feet are everything to me, Rādhe! I will paint them with lines of lac and ornament them for Your pleasure.”

Regaining external awareness in his form as Rūpa Gosvāmī, he prays, “O Svāminī! O my Rādhe! I used to perform these services for You! I used to do all these things. Please Rādhe, I want my position and my *sevā* back. When will You bring me back to You?”

त्वत्कुण्ड-रोधसि विलास-परिश्रमेण
स्वेदाम्बु-चुम्बि-वदनाम्बुरुह-श्रियौ वाम् ।
वृन्दावनेश्वरि! कदा तरु-मूल-भाजौ
संवीजयामि चमरी-चय-चामरेण? ॥६॥

tvat-kuṇḍa-rodhasi vilāsa-parīśrameṇa
svedāmbu-cumbi-vadanāmburuha-śriyau vām
vṛndāvaneśvari! kadā taru-mūla-bhājau
saiṁvījayāmi camarī-caya-cāmareṇa? (6)

O Vṛndāvaneśvari! After enjoying love-sports with Kṛṣṇa on the bank of Your *kuṇḍa*, Your lotus faces splendorously decorated with drops of perspiration, You will both relax upon a jewelled *siṁhāsana* beneath a desire tree. When You are in that condition, when will I be able to soothe You by fanning You with a *cāmara*?

Commentary

Here Rūpa Mañjarī is praying, “Hey Svāminī! On the banks of Your *kuṇḍa*, which is dearer to me than my own life, there is a place which is lush with many *kadamba* trees and fragrant flowers such as *mālatī* and *campā*. Beautiful creepers wind around the trees and the fragrance of their flowers is spreading all around. Your *kuṇḍa* is brimming full like my heart, Devī, and is decorated with clusters of blossoming lotuses. Hey Rādhe! You are lying there with Kṛṣṇa at this location on the bank. You are both tired from Your sweet pastimes and beads of perspiration are visible on Your foreheads, sparkling there so beautifully like pearls decorating Your faces.”

What are these pastimes that have tired Them so much? The clever *sakhīs*, having seen Kṛṣṇa absorbed in speaking with Rādhe, craftily stole His flute. They laughed and put it to their lips, knowing that it is always kissed by His lips. When He realised His *vaṁsī* was missing, He was immediately alarmed and cried out, “Where is My *priya-vaṁsī*? Oh where is she who never leaves my side? Where is she, the dearest companion of My lips?” Kṛṣṇa ran from one *gopī* to another inquiring about the whereabouts of

His dear flute. Feeling that such loving expressions and such eagerness for association should be reserved solely for Rādhikā, the *gopīs* passed the flute around between them, saying, “Lalitā has it!”, “Rūpa Mañjarī has it!” and sometimes, “Your *vamśī* is so unchaste that she has left You altogether!”

Kṛṣṇa and Śrīmatī Rādhikā are lying there together, tired from this play and from their games of hiding. Big, black bees are coming in swarms and trying to enter the flower of Śrīmatī Rādhikā’s lotus feet. Attracted by the fragrance, the bees cannot see that they are actually feet, but believe they have discovered a new and most wonderful flower.

Many *gopīs* are there surrounding Śrīmatī. Some are waving the *cāmara*, so very slowly, softly, and sweetly. Some are waving peacock fans, and others softly wave the corners of their *sarīs* over Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s head to cool Him. Rūpa Mañjarī prays, “Rādhe, when will You say to me, ‘O *dāsī*, I am very tired. Will you come to Me? Will you take up this *cāmara*, such a beautiful one, white and soft, its handle more precious than gold, and sweetly fan Me?”

“O Devi! I will come! Taking that *cāmara* and also bringing the fresh, soft leaves of the *aśoka* tree as well as peacock feathers, I will softly fan You. O Vraja-devike! When will this become a reality?”

लीनां निकुञ्ज-कुहरे भवतीं मुकुन्दे
चित्रैव सूचितवती रुचिराक्षि! नाहम् ।
भुग्नां भ्रुवं न रचयेति मृषा-रुषां त्वा-
मग्रे व्रजेन्द्र-तनयस्य कदा नु नेष्ये? ॥७॥

*linām nikuñja-kuhare bhavatīm mukunde
citraiva sūcitavatī rucirākṣi! nāham
bhugnām bhruvaṁ na racayeti mṛṣā-ruṣām tvām
agre vrajendra-tanayasya kadā nu neṣye? (7)*

O beautiful-eyed Rādhike! When You will playfully hide in a secret place within a *kuñja* and Śrī Kṛṣṇa comes to know where You are hiding and approaches You, You will ask me, “Hey Rūpa Mañjarī! Why did you tell Kṛṣṇa where I was hiding?” Then I will reply, “No, no, I didn’t tell; it was Citrā Sakhī who told Him. Therefore please do not frown at me.” When will I speak these entreating words to You, while seeing You standing before Kṛṣṇa and accusing me? When will such a day come?

Commentary

Rādhikā and Kṛṣṇa are playing gambling games, chasing one another’s counters across the board with the throw of dice. As Rādhikā begins to lose the game, Kṛṣṇa starts to smile to Himself, happily seeing that He is winning. Seeing this, Rādhikā

becomes angry and, jumping up very quickly, runs away. No one can tell where She has gone and Kṛṣṇa begins running here and there, searching all over for Her. Then He takes Viśākhā-devī's cloth in His hands and pleads with her, "Where can I find She who fulfils My heart's desire?" Though secretly laughing at Him, outwardly Viśākhā appears very serious and, pointing to a far distant *kuñja*, says, "Oh, She is hiding there."

Immediately Kṛṣṇa runs all the way to that place, watched by all the *sakhīs*. When He arrives there, He finds it empty, and although all the *sakhīs* and *mañjarīs* are laughing at Him so much that tears roll down their cheeks, still He immediately runs all the way back. Out of breath, He appeals to Lalitā with His eyes and she points out a nearby *kuñja*. But then, from the corner of His eye, He sees that Viśākhā is still laughing and thinks, "Oh, Viśākhā has lied, and since Lalitā is such good friends with her, surely Lalitā is lying also!" So, instead of following Lalitā's indication, He approaches Citrā and says, "Oh, where is My Rādhā?" Without speaking, Citrā directs Him to the correct *kuñja* with an indication from the corners of her lotus eyes. Straight away He goes and finds Rādhikā hiding there.

Rūpa Mañjarī prays, "O my life! My Rādhā! I have followed Him there and am waiting outside. Then when You at last emerge from the *kuñja* with Kṛṣṇa, You see me standing there, turn Your head sharply to look at me with heavy eyebrows and creased-up brow, and say, 'You *mañjarī*! Why did you show Him My secret hiding place?' Then I will say, 'O Sakhī, please don't be angry with me. Don't direct Your heavy glances and frowning eyebrows at me. I can see Your body trembling in a sudden rage. Right in front of Vrajendra-nandana, You are chastising me, Your loyal *dāsī*. It was Citrā who showed Him Your hiding place. Why don't You ask Your laughing friend Kṛṣṇa, who certainly knows the truth?' Rādhē, when will that day come when You will look at me like that and I will defend myself? Will You ever give that opportunity to me?"

वाग्‍युद्ध-केलि-कुतुके व्रजराज-सूनुं
जित्‍वोन्‍मदामधिक-दर्प-विकासि-जल्पाम् ।
फुल्लाभिरालिभिरनल्पमुदीर्यमाण-
स्तोत्रां कदा नु भवतीमवलोकयिष्ये? ॥८॥

*vāg-yuddha-keli-kutuke vraja-rāja-sūnuṁ
jitvonmadām adhika-darpa-vikāsi-jalpām
phullābhir ālibhir analpam udīryamāṇa-
stotrām kadā nu bhavatīm abalokayiṣye? (8)*

When You defeat Śrī Kṛṣṇa in a playful war of words, You become immensely joyful and boast of Your victory to Your girlfriends. Then the *sakhīs* will express their delight by exclaiming, "Jaya Rādhē! Jaya Rādhē!" Oh, when will I become fortunate enough to participate in Your victory chorus?

Commentary

Here Rūpa Mañjarī is praying, “O crown-jewel of *sakhīs*, my Svāminī Rādhā, when will I see You heavily engaged in word-battles with the Prince of Vraja? These arguments wherein You cleverly defeat that Nanda-nandana are the joy of all Your *sakhīs*!

“Kṛṣṇa is eager to meet with You and is burning in separation from You. He has sent both Lalitā and Viśākhā with sweetly-worded messages for You, but You said, ‘No, I will not go to Him!’ One by one He sent each of His beloved *dūtīs* (messenger *gopīs*), even Vṛndā and Kundalatā, who are very expert at revealing His heart to You and softening Your heart towards Him, but even they have not succeeded. At last He sent the clever Subala who said, ‘That young, fresh boy Kṛṣṇa is just ready to give up His life. He is like a wilting lotus starved of water. Because You refuse Him again and again, He is just now on the point of death. I am not praying to You, proud girl, nor shall I beg You to go to Him, but You should at least hear this message and consider its meaning.’

“Rādhike! You are hearing all this and thinking aloud, addressing the sky in a thoughtful tone, ‘Oh! He will soon give up His life! That fickle boy! How little He cares for His mother Yaśodā who is worshipped by us *gopīs*. How he has hardened His heart toward His father Nanda. Indeed, how little He cares for the whole of Vraja! It is solely up to Me to save them. How will they live after His death, trapped and addicted as they are to His honey-tasting, deceitful words? They will all blame Me for His death and it will be very inauspicious for Me. And another thing! No one can match Me in argument but Him, so how will I pass My time without Him?’

“O Devi! Thinking like this, You gather together a strong group of Your *sakhīs* and, surrounded by Them, You start off for Rādhā-kuṇḍa by the cover of night. When You arrive there, You see Kṛṣṇa sitting sorrowfully, gazing at Your pond and desiring to enter into it in His distress. Although the sight is charming to the hearts of all, You immediately turn around and without speaking any words, start to walk back home. Kṛṣṇa calls out to You, ‘O hey Prāṇa-priya!’ He is thinking that perhaps you have not seen Him and have considered all His messages to be jokes. You hear Him, but You do not care! He starts to follow You thinking, ‘How is this? She has walked so far to see Me, but without speaking She is now going away again! What could have happened to make Her so angry?’ Devi, seeing that He is following behind, You alarm all Your *sakhīs* and also all the ornaments of Your dress by suddenly starting to run. Then that King of Cheats, Vrajendra-nandana Kṛṣṇa, becomes desperate and runs in front of You, blocking Your progress with His strong vine-like arms.

“Now You shower Your *sakhīs* with the nectar of the *darsana* of Your angry face, and, furious with Him, You ask, ‘O boy! Who are You and why do You stop Me like this? I am just now going to My home. I should not have to be harassed by any village boy out late at night. I am in a pure state, having this morning taken my bath in this *kuṇḍa*. I have just come here in the safe company of My *sakhīs* to touch this water for further purification and now I am returning home to worship our household Deities. How dare You touch Me! You are dirty from being in the fields all day and I fear Your heart is also far from clean.’

“Kṛṣṇa is proud of the strength of His long arms and having You in His embrace, He replies, ‘O beautiful girl, now You have come into My kingdom! I am Vṛndāvana-candra, and You must take My permission to leave here!’ Seeing these arguments going on between You and Kṛṣṇa, all the *sakhīs* and I laugh and cheer loudly whenever You cleverly defeat His crooked words.

“Eventually Lalitā-sakhī says, ‘O hey Nanda-tanaya! Don’t touch my *sakhī* and don’t speak to Her like that! Must a simple, pure and honest girl like Her remain shut up in Her house out of fear of rogues like You? Are the roads not safe after sundown even though we are travelling in such a large group? You have banished all the demons and left us with a greater demon (there is no greater demon than He who ravishes young girls!) I shall certainly take a case against You to the High Court at Mathurā. Let us see what Kāmsa will give as Your punishment!’

“Kṛṣṇa is quite defeated, but He is so proud that He will not accept His defeat and holds You in His strong arms, flooding You with joy. Although all the *sakhīs* are clapping and laughing loudly, He is so shameless that He doesn’t care. O Svāminī! When will I see Your smiling lotus mouth engaged in this argument and garland You with a string of beautiful prayers as I clasp my arms around Your neck? O Devi! When will all this be mine to see and hear?”

यः कोऽपि सुष्ठु वृषभानु-कुमारिकायाः
संप्रार्थनाष्टकमिदं पठति प्रपन्नः ।
सा प्रेयसा सह समेत्य धृत-प्रमोदा
तत्र प्रसाद-लहरीमुररी-करोति ॥९॥

*yaḥ ko 'pi suṣṭhu vṛṣabhānu-kumārikāyāḥ
samprārthanāṣṭakam idaṁ paṭhati prapannaḥ
sā preyasā saha sametya dhṛta-pramodā
tatra prasāda-laharīm urarī-karoti (9)*

Any surrendered soul who with great faith recites these eight appeals to the daughter of Vṛṣabhānu Mahārāja will receive direct *darśana* of Her accompanied by Her beloved Śrī Kṛṣṇa and feel the waves of Her happiness shower upon him. This *aṣṭaka* is sung in the melody known as ‘Vasantatilakā’.

Commentary

Vṛṣabhānu-nandinī Śrīmatī Rādhikā will very quickly fulfil all the desires of a devotee who surrenders to these prayers every day with a heart full of deep *bhāva* and sings them with deep thirst while crying tears of love.

